

3-1-1971

A Study of the Doctrine of Holiness in the Thought of A. W. Tozer

Kenneth Leroy Friesen

Recommended Citation

Friesen, Kenneth Leroy, "A Study of the Doctrine of Holiness in the Thought of A. W. Tozer" (1971). *Western Evangelical Seminary Theses*. 253.

https://digitalcommons.georgefox.edu/wes_theses/253

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Western Evangelical Seminary at Digital Commons @ George Fox University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Western Evangelical Seminary Theses by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ George Fox University. For more information, please contact arolfe@georgefox.edu.

A STUDY OF THE DOCTRINE OF HOLINESS

IN THE THOUGHT OF A. W. TOZER

A Thesis

Presented to

the Faculty of

Western Evangelical Seminary

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Divinity

by

Kenneth Leroy Friesen

March 1971

/

APPROVED BY

Major Professor:

Elton R. Fuhrman

Co-operative Reader:

Nobel V. Sack

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am indebted to a number of persons for their invaluable guidance and assistance in the researching, writing, and producing of this study on A. W. Tozer's doctrine of holiness. I sincerely express my appreciation to the following: to Dr. Nobel V. Sack of Western Evangelical Seminary for reading and making valuable criticisms of the study; to Dr. Eldon R. Fuhrman of Western Evangelical Seminary, my major professor, for suggesting the area of study, for his conferences with me along the way, for his encouragement, and for his kind and constructive criticisms throughout; to the Reverend Ernest Evers, pastor of the Walla Walla, Washington, Christian and Missionary Alliance Church, for graciously loaning me his bound volumes of The Alliance Weekly and The Alliance Witness for over a year; and to my dear wife, Jane, for her encouragement, criticisms, and many long days spent typing the study two different times, as well as for her being a helpful and patient student's wife. Without these persons the study would have been far more difficult, if not impossible.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. STATEMENTS OF INTRODUCTION	1
The Problem	1
Justification of the Study	1
Limitations	2
Materials and Procedure	2
Arrangement	3
II. "THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE HOLY"	4
The Fact of God	4
The Doctrine of God	7
The Importance of the Doctrine	7
What God Is Like	9
The Holiness of God: How It Is Known	9
The Holiness of God: What It Is	13
God's holiness unique and unchanging	13
God's holiness related to creation	14
Summary	15
The Experience of God	16
The Definition of the Experience of God	17
The Importance of the Experience of God	19
The Reception of the Experience of God	20
The Experience of Holiness	22
Summary	24
Summary-Conclusions	25

CHAPTER	PAGE
III. "MAN: THE DWELLING PLACE OF GOD"	26
The Nature and Purpose of Man	27
The Nature of Man	27
The Purpose of Man	28
God's Temple	29
The Predicament of Man	30
Man's Guilt	31
Man's Alienation	32
Man's Perverseness	33
The Provision for Man	35
The Call of God and the Response of Man	37
The Call of God	38
The Response of Man	39
The response of man in repentance	39
The response of man in faith	40
The Beginning of the Restoration of Man	42
Introduction	42
Regeneration and the Divine Nature	44
Regeneration: a New Beginning	44
Regeneration: a Change	45
Regeneration and Holiness	46
Summary	47
Summary and Conclusions	48
Summary of Chapter Three	48
Conclusions of Chapter Three	49

CHAPTER	PAGE
IV. "THE PURSUIT OF GOD" AND "THE DIVINE CONQUEST"	51
"The Pursuit of God" Begun	52
Introduction	52
God Draws, Man Pursues	54
Desire for Holiness	56
Depravity	61
Summary	68
Surrender	70
The need for the surrender of things	70
The experience of the surrender of things	71
The need for the surrender of all	72
The experience of the surrender of all	73
The results of the surrender of things	74
The results of the surrender of all	75
Summary of Surrender	76
Death	76
The distinctions of the cross	77
The meaning of the cross	79
The necessity of the cross	82
The experience of the cross	84
Summary of Death	86
Summary of "'The Pursuit of God' Begun"	88
"The Divine Conquest"	89
The Doctrine of Christ	90
Christ in the Trinity	91

CHAPTER	PAGE
Christ in all	92
Christ is all	93
The Lordship of Christ	94
Christ and holiness	98
Summary of the Doctrine of Christ	102
Conclusions	102
Cleansing	103
"How holy is the Christian made?"	105
"How is the Christian made holy?"	111
Summary of Cleansing	114
The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit	114
The neglect of the Spirit	115
Thinking about the Spirit	117
The right of and the need for the Spirit	
in the Church	119
Summary of the Doctrine of the Holy Spirit	121
The Filling with the Spirit: Needed and Provided . . .	122
The world, the Christian, and the Spirit	122
First century and contemporary Christians compared . .	124
The Spirit of truth	127
The Spirit of power	129
The Spirit of worship	132
The Spirit of purity	134
The Spirit of gifts	135
The Holy Spirit provided	136

CHAPTER

PAGE

Summary	139
The Filling with the Holy Spirit: Preparation,	
Reception and Results	140
Getting rid of sin	141
Getting rid of fear	141
Acknowledging and repenting neglect	142
Preaching and believing	143
Believe the filling is possible	144
Have strong desire	145
Be sure of the need	146
Crucifixion	146
Receiving the Spirit	147
Results of the filling with the Holy Spirit	149
Summary	153
"The Pursuit of God" Continued	154
Life After Death	155
The character of faith	156
The means of grace	156
Time and purpose	157
Recognizing imperfections	158
Temptation	159
Spiritual dryness and staleness	160
The necessity of choices	162
Spiritual mood	162
The fellowship of the Spirit	163

CHAPTER	PAGE
Characteristics of a Saint	167
Summary	169
Summary and Conclusions	170
Summary	170
Conclusions	172
V. SUMMARIES, CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS	
FOR FURTHER STUDY	175
Summary of Tozer's Theology	175
"The Knowledge of the Holy"	176
"Man: The Dwelling Place of God"	177
"The Pursuit of God" and	
"The Divine Conquest"	180
Summary of Tozer's Doctrine of Holiness	182
Understanding Holiness	182
The Holiness of God	183
The Holiness of God Related to Creation	184
The Experience of Holiness	185
The Holiness of Man in Regeneration	185
The Christian's Desire for Holiness	186
The Christian's Unholiness	188
The Reception of Holiness: Surrender	189
The Reception of Holiness: Death	189
Christ and Holiness	190
The Reception of Holiness: Cleansing	191
The Holy Spirit	192

CHAPTER	PAGE
The Reception of Holiness: The Need for the Spirit's Filling	193
The Reception of Holiness: The Provision of the Spirit's Filling	194
The Reception of Holiness: Preparation for the Spirit's Filling	194
The Reception of Holiness: Receiving the Spirit's Filling	195
The Reception of Holiness: Results of the Spirit's Filling	196
The Spirit-Filled Life	196
Conclusions of the Study	197
Tozer's Theology	197
Tozer's Doctrine of Holiness in Relation to His Theology	197
Tozer's Doctrine of Holiness	198
Suggestions For Further Study	199
BIBLIOGRAPHY	202

CHAPTER I

STATEMENTS OF INTRODUCTION

Holiness, its true meaning and place in the experience of Christian living, has always been a special concern for serious, thoughtful Christians. It has been interpreted in the context of Holy Scripture, Christian history, and contemporary life, with the resulting beliefs usually dividing along denominational or theological lines. The Christian populace has naturally received its teachings about holiness from the lips and pens of its leaders. One such leader was Aiden Wilson Tozer, (1897-1963), a pastor of the Christian and Missionary Alliance, editor of "The Alliance Witness," Bible teacher, and writer. His teaching on holiness was the subject of this study.

I. THE PROBLEM

This study was undertaken to determine the nature of A. W. Tozer's doctrine of holiness and its place in relation to his theology as a whole.

II. JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

"What was A. W. Tozer's doctrine of holiness?" was the question that led to the investigation of the problem. So far as was known, no one had done a systematic study focusing particularly on Tozer's beliefs about holiness. The only extensive work about Tozer is his biography by

David J. Fant, Jr., A. W. Tozer: A Twentieth Century Prophet.¹ It is not, however, a systematic analysis of Tozer's doctrine of holiness. Also, conversations with people who had read some of Tozer's work revealed either doubt as to what he really believed about holiness, or conflicting opinions about his views. The lack of an existing study and the doubts and conflicts concerning his views (particularly in the light of his reputation and influence among evangelicals of many denominations) furnished the justification for an investigation into Tozer's doctrine of holiness.

III. LIMITATIONS

The study was based upon Tozer's editorials, books, magazine articles, and tracts. Since only a relatively few of his sermons have been reprinted, the conclusions reached in this study did not necessarily pertain to his spoken ministry. Also, no attempt was made to determine the scripturalness of his doctrine, or to compare it with holiness teachings of other Christians. Finally, the study did not try to show how or why he arrived at his beliefs; it was descriptive in purpose, rather than argumentative.

IV. MATERIALS AND PROCEDURE

All available articles, editorials, books, tracts, and printed sermons were the primary source materials. Secondary materials were

¹David J. Fant, Jr., A. W. Tozer: A Twentieth Century Prophet (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Christian Publications, Inc., 1964). All subsequent footnotes are to works by A. W. Tozer.

consulted but not used. At the first reading all materials not relating to the problem were discarded and an outline of Tozer's theology was developed. The second reading resulted in various materials being placed within the outline. Finally, the findings and conclusions were presented in the form found in the thesis.

V. ARRANGEMENT

Chapters Two through Four were the description of Tozer's doctrine of holiness, and were arranged to express the order he probably would have used had he systematically explicated his beliefs about holiness. The titles of these chapters are the titles of three of his books, but the materials in the chapters were drawn from various sources. These book titles were used as chapter titles because it was felt that they summarized best what Tozer emphasized in his teaching. The summaries, conclusions, and suggestions for further study make up Chapter Five.

CHAPTER II

"THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE HOLY"¹

For A. W. Tozer God was all-important.² While some theologies have made holiness central to their system, with everything in the theology flowing out from the doctrine and experience of holiness, Tozer's theology flowed out of his concept of God. All that follows in this study is evidence of this. His thought about God was divided for this study into three areas: the fact of God, the doctrine of God, and the experience of God.

I. THE FACT OF GOD

Emphatically and repeatedly, Tozer taught the importance of God Himself:

In determining relationships we must begin somewhere. There must be somewhere a fixed center against which everything else is measured, where the law of relativity does not enter and we can say 'IS' and make no allowances. Such a center is God.³

God is where we must begin; it is in Him that we can "get our moral bearings."⁴ "'In the beginning God' is undoubtedly the most important sentence in the Bible. It is in God that all things begin, and all

¹The Knowledge of the Holy (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1961).

²Anita M. Bailey, "Introduction," A. W. Tozer, Man: The Dwelling Place of God (Harrisburg, Pa.: Christian Publications, Inc., 1966), p. 7.

³The Pursuit of God (Harrisburg, Pa.: Christian Publications, Inc., 1948), p. 100.

⁴Ibid., p. 101.

thoughts as well."⁵ He is the originator, "back of all, above all, before all . . . first in sequential order, above in rank and station, exalted in dignity and honor."⁶

Everything not only proceeds from God, Tozer said, but everything must relate to God. For example, "the fact of God is necessary to the fact of man. Think God away and man has no ground of existence."⁷ The Christian, in trying to understand man and the world, is an unashamed transcendentalist, supernaturalist, and absolutist,⁸ who believes there is a world beyond, a Divine One who is behind creation, a God who ". . . is among other things uncreated, self-sufficient, eternal, infinite, sovereign, and absolute . . . absolutely holy, absolutely wise . . . unaffected by anything external to Himself."⁹ He Himself is to be always "the object of our worship."¹⁰ It is true that there was a time when God was alone, ". . . with only the Persons of the Triune God to know and love each other;"¹¹ but, God created moral beings, and He "is the essence of all beauty, the fountain of all spiritual sweetness that can be known or desired by moral beings."¹² Having fallen away

⁵Man: The Dwelling Place of God, op. cit., p. 22.

⁶The Pursuit of God, op. cit., p. 101.

⁷The Knowledge of the Holy, op. cit., p. 35.

⁸Born After Midnight (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Christian Publications, Inc., 1959), p. 21.

⁹Ibid., pp. 21, 22.

¹⁰The Tozer Pulpit, comp. Gerald B. Smith (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Christian Publications, Inc., 1967), I, p. 54.

¹¹Born After Midnight, op. cit., p. 123.

¹²Ibid., p. 124.

from God, Christ's redemption was to make these beings once again "admirers and lovers of the Triune God."¹³ Since, then, God's purpose in saving men is to "make them worshipers,"¹⁴ worship before works should be our emphasis today; works will naturally follow worship.¹⁵ Prayer also must be God-related in that it seeks His glory: "Before any petitions are allowed, the name of God must be hallowed."¹⁶ Even the gospel itself does not put man's salvation first, rather, it "puts the glory of God first. . . ."¹⁷ Tozer believed Christianity in his day was in error when it began with the needs of man and then looked for God. He said, "God's glory is and must forever remain the Christian's true point of departure. Anything that begins anywhere else, whatever it is, is certainly not New Testament Christianity."¹⁸ The gifts of God are also God-related. Tozer wrote an editorial which he titled, "God's Best Gift."¹⁹ In it he said God gives many gifts, but He has one gift that is best, which above all others He wants to bestow--Himself. The love, mercy, and other blessings of God are but God giving us Himself: "There is a sense in which God never gives any gift except He gives Himself with it."²⁰ Knowing God is life eternal,

¹³Ibid., pp. 124, 125. ¹⁴Ibid., p. 125. ¹⁵Ibid., p. 126.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 23. ¹⁷Ibid. ¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹"God's Best Gift," The Alliance Weekly, Vol. 88 (June 3, 1953), p. 2. Cf. "God Must Be Loved for Himself," Man: The Dwelling Place of God, op. cit., pp. 56-59.

²⁰"God's Best Gift," op. cit., p. 2. Cf. Tozer's last sermon before his death, in The Alliance Witness, Vol. 98 (July 24, 1963), p. 3, where he said God's greatest gift is ". . . Christ to be in our nature forever."

for which man is and was created. Satan's "master blow" in the beginning was "the destruction of our God-awareness;"²¹ therefore,

To give God back to us was the chief work of Christ in redemption. To impart Himself to us in personal experience is the first purpose of God in salvation. To bring acute God-awareness is the best help the Spirit brings in sanctification.²²

In summary, the fact of God means that God is important in and of Himself. It also means that since He is the center of all, all things in creation and all acts in creation must relate to Him.

II. THE DOCTRINE OF GOD

If God is singularly important and all things have reference to Him, then it follows that theology, the study of God, is unquestionably the most important study we can undertake.²³

The Importance of the Doctrine

A recovery of the true knowledge of God's being and character, Tozer felt, was essential to the revival of religion in his day.²⁴ He saw the loss of a noble conception of God as the cause of losing God-consciousness, the "spirit of worship," and the "ability to withdraw inwardly to meet God in adoring silence."²⁵ It is also "impossible to

²¹"God's Best Gift," op. cit., p. 2.

²²Ibid.

²³That Incredible Christian (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Christian Publications, Inc., 1964), pp. 30, 31.

²⁴The Knowledge of the Holy, op. cit., pp. 6, 7.

²⁵Ibid., p. 6.

keep our moral practices sound and our inward attitudes right while our idea of God is erroneous or inadequate."²⁶

Tozer encouraged study and meditation on the character and being of God, attempting in his writings to correct false notions about God and to stimulate his reader to an ever-increasing knowledge of God.²⁷ A person's mental image of God is crucial: "What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us;"²⁸ it is practical, for "we tend by a secret law of the soul to move toward our mental image of God . . . not only the individual Christian, but . . . the church."²⁹ Almost all errors in doctrine and ethics find their root in wrong thinking about God.³⁰ The gospel itself is destroyed for those who hold "low views of God," because man will not see its meaning until he comes under the burden of his obligation to fully love, to perfectly obey, and to acceptably worship Him, and then finds out that he has failed to do these things.³¹ Church revival will come with personal revival, and this may be accomplished by following the simple counsel: "Acquaint thyself with God."³²

²⁶Ibid., p. 7. Cf. The Tozer Pulpit, I, op. cit., pp. 118, 119.

²⁷The Knowledge of the Holy, op. cit., pp. 8, 114. Cf. The Root of the Righteous (Harrisburg, Pa.: Christian Publications, Inc., 1955), pp. 10-13 and That Incredible Christian, op. cit., pp. 135-137. This point was expanded in Chapter IV "'The Pursuit of God' and 'The Divine Conquest'."

²⁸The Knowledge of the Holy, op. cit., p. 9. ²⁹Ibid.

³⁰Ibid., p. 10. Cf. The Root of the Righteous, op. cit., pp. 13-16.

³¹The Knowledge of the Holy, op. cit., p. 11.

³²Ibid., p. 121, Tozer's italics. Cf. The Pursuit of God, op.

What God Is Like

What kind of a God must we know? Tozer's most comprehensive answer was given in his book The Knowledge of the Holy.³³ This book on the attributes of God, among other things, discussed the "Self-existence of God," "The Self-sufficiency of God," "The Omnipotence of God," "The Faithfulness of God," and His mercy, love, grace, justice, goodness, and holiness.³⁴ Tozer's God was the God of the Bible:

It says in the Bible that God dwells in light that is unapproachable, whom no man can see or has seen, and whom no man can see and live.

It says that God is holy and eternal and omnipotent and omniscient and sovereign, and that He has a thousand sovereign attributes. And all of these should humble and bring us down!³⁵

It was seen, then, that Tozer strongly believed in the fact of God; but, he also put emphasis upon the doctrine of God, upon the kind of God who exists and should be known. One of the attributes of God especially pertinent to this study is holiness.

The Holiness of God: How It Is Known

By way of introduction to the discussion of Tozer's view of the holiness of God, he taught the following about the attributes of God:

cit., p. 101.

³³The Knowledge of the Holy, loc. cit. Although it was not the purpose of this study to show Tozer's theology in every detail, but to study his doctrine of holiness and its place in his theology, a brief description of the kind of God in which Tozer believed is helpful to the discussion of this chapter.

³⁴Ibid., p. 5. ³⁵The Tozer Pulpit, I, op. cit., p. 54.

The divine attributes are what we know to be true of God. He does not possess them as qualities; they are how God is as He reveals Himself to His creatures. Love, for instance, is not something God has and which may grow or diminish or cease to be. His love is the way God is, and when He loves He is simply being Himself. And so with the other attributes.³⁶

In studying any attribute, the essential oneness of all the attributes soon becomes apparent. We see, for instance, that if God is self-existent He must be also self-sufficient; and if He has power He, being infinite, must have all power.³⁷

The attributes also harmonize with each other. It is false to think that God is ever at cross-purposes with Himself, torn, for instance, between mercy and justice.³⁸ Overemphasizing one attribute "to the exclusion of another is to head straight for one of the dismal swamps of theology. . . ."³⁹ For example, God is love, but it has been taught in a manner that virtually denies His justice. "Others press the Biblical doctrine of God's goodness so far that it is made to contradict His holiness."⁴⁰ What, then, did Tozer teach about the holiness of God?

More than half of his discussion of God's holiness in The Knowledge of the Holy⁴¹ was concerned with the effect of the Fall upon man's understanding of holiness, how he comes back to a true knowledge of holiness, and the effect of that knowledge.

The Fall touched every part of man's nature and environment. Depravity keeps us from much concern about how things are around us,

³⁶The Knowledge of the Holy, op. cit., p. 24.

³⁷Ibid., p. 84.

³⁸Ibid., p. 85.

³⁹Ibid. ⁴⁰Ibid.

⁴¹Ibid., pp. 110-114.

and unholiness seems to be natural.⁴² Natural man is even blind to what God's holiness is, though he may admire God's wisdom and fear His power.⁴³ Every man does have something in him which produces "nonrational dread," a feeling that there is "Something" holding the universe, an "It," an "unnamed, undiscoverable Presence," "the uncreated Mystery;"⁴⁴ this feeling is at the root of religion.⁴⁵ But this only makes a man speak of "'That awful Thing,'" not to say, "'Mine Holy One!'"⁴⁶ Man's problem is how to know what true holiness is.

True holiness cannot be understood by the mind through extension, "by thinking of someone or something very pure and then raising the concept to the highest degree we are capable of."⁴⁷ It cannot be understood by comparison, for nothing we know is like it. God's holiness is so different that it "stands apart, unique, unapproachable, incomprehensible and unattainable."⁴⁸ In fact, Tozer said,

Neither the writer nor the reader of these words is qualified to appreciate the holiness of God. Quite literally a new channel must be cut through the desert of our minds to allow the sweet waters of truth that will heal our great sickness to flow in.⁴⁹

If a new work is needed for man to understand the holiness of God, if man's reasoning powers are inadequate, God Himself has the answer. "Only the Spirit of the Holy One can impart to the human spirit the

⁴²Ibid., pp. 110, 111.

⁴³Ibid., p. 111.

⁴⁴Ibid., pp. 111, 112. Tozer acknowledges Rudolph Otto's study here.

⁴⁵Ibid., p. 112.

⁴⁶Ibid.

⁴⁷Ibid., p. 111.

⁴⁸Ibid.

⁴⁹Ibid.

knowledge of the holy."⁵⁰ The way He works is through "theological knowledge" (truth) producing faith in the humbly penitent heart.⁵¹

The effect of this revelation to the heart is like Isaiah's experience, revolutionary and "emotionally violent."⁵² It is the experience of a man realizing his own depravity, discovering "himself under his disguises," and it is a confrontation "with an inward sight of the holy whiteness that is God."⁵³ The Christian, who certainly possesses with all men the same root feeling about the Mystery of the universe, gains through the Word and the Spirit the revelation of the "personality and moral character" of God.⁵⁴ These two realms of knowledge, (1) the natural instinct of "an unknown God" and (2) God's self-revelation as a "moral being with all the warm qualities of genuine personality," may cause the Christian one day to happily call God "'Abba Father, my Lord and my God!'" and the next day kneel "with delighted trembling to admire and adore the High and Lofty One that inhabiteth eternity."⁵⁵

It is clear from the preceding discussion that Tozer taught the necessity of divine revelation for gaining an understanding of God's holiness. It comes through the Word of God, the Spirit of God, and a personal experience, and it results in a revelation of personal inner uncleanness and the response of worship.

⁵⁰Ibid.

⁵¹Ibid.

⁵²Ibid., p. 110.

⁵³Ibid.

⁵⁴Ibid., p. 112.

⁵⁵Ibid.

The Holiness of God: What It Is

The latter part of Tozer's discussion dealt with defining and describing God's holiness and relating it to His creation.

God's holiness unique and unchanging. Tozer defined an attribute as "how God is;" it is not "a part of God."⁵⁶ Holiness, therefore, is not a part of God, but the way He is. He is holy. His holiness is unique in that He is the standard of holiness; He is not called upon to conform to a standard.⁵⁷ "He is absolutely holy with an infinite, incomprehensible fullness of purity that is incapable of being other than it is."⁵⁸ This uniqueness of God's holiness is seen also in the Holy Spirit, for He is pure in the absolute and infinite sense, while men have "grades and degrees of holiness."⁵⁹ Besides being unique, God's holiness is unchanging. Since one of God's attributes is immutability, which means He never varies from Himself, "He has never been less holy than He is now and can never be holier than He is and has always been."⁶⁰ In other words, "God cannot change for the better," and if we think of Him changing for the worse, the one of whom we think is no more God.⁶¹ In brief, God's holiness, Tozer believed, is the only one of its kind and knows no change.

⁵⁶Ibid., p. 23. Tozer's italics.

⁵⁷Ibid., p. 112.

⁵⁸Ibid., pp. 112, 113.

⁵⁹The Divine Conquest (Harrisburg, Pa.: Christian Publications, Inc., 1950), p. 99.

⁶⁰The Knowledge of the Holy, op. cit., p. 55.

⁶¹Ibid.

God's holiness related to creation. The next aspect of God's holiness in Tozer's discussion was its relation to creation. It was holiness that God made to be "the moral condition necessary to the health of His universe."⁶² Holiness being wholeness or healthiness, as the derivation of the English word suggests, and God's prime concern for creation being moral health, anything contrary to it comes under His wrath. His judgments on earth have always been holy acts for its preservation.⁶³ Tozer defined the holiness God shares with His creatures as "relative and contingent," for His absolute holiness is not communicable.⁶⁴ The holiness He gives man is both imputed and imparted, and since the atonement of Christ makes it available to man, it is required. "'Be ye holy; for I am holy'" is not the demand of God for absolute perfection; He did not say man was to be as holy as God is holy.⁶⁵ At this point in discussing God's holiness in The Knowledge of the Holy, Tozer posed the problem that every Christian faces: before the holiness of God no one who is honest can say "'I am holy'," but the scriptural command "'Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord,'" cannot be ignored.⁶⁶ He said the same thing in a different way in the book Born After Midnight:

God's holy character requires that He refuse to admit sin into His fellowship. Through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus

⁶²Ibid., p. 113. Cf. Man: The Dwelling Place of God, op. cit., p. 110.

⁶³The Knowledge of the Holy, op. cit., p. 113. Cf. Man: The Dwelling Place of God, op. cit., pp. 110, 111.

⁶⁴The Knowledge of the Holy, loc. cit. ⁶⁵Ibid., p. 113.

⁶⁶Ibid., pp. 112, 113.

mercy may pardon the returning sinner and place him judicially beyond the reach of the broken law; but not the boundless grace nor the infinite kindness of God can make it morally congruous for a pure being to have communion with an impure one.⁶⁷

The answer to the dilemma of unholy man having fellowship with a holy God is ". . . an adequate purgation of the inner springs of moral conduct and the impartation of a renewed nature to the believer. . . ." ⁶⁸

Tozer taught that the relationship of God's holiness to creation is a matter of moral health, His wrath being a preservative, and that His holiness in relationship to man is not based on His absolute holiness, but on a relative holiness imputed, imparted, provided, and required, and finally, that the answer to the problem of fellowship between a holy God and unholy man is the purging and renewing of man. The subject noted last, the problem of sinful man knowing a holy God, has received extended treatment in Chapter III and Chapter IV of this study.

Summary

The first two sections of this chapter are summarized as follows: since God is The Important One, learning about His being and character is the supreme study of life; our thoughts about what He is and how He acts are crucial to us as individual Christians, to the Church, and to revival. God is described in terms of such attributes as omnipotence, faithfulness, love, self-sufficiency, and holiness.

⁶⁷ Born After Midnight, op. cit., p. 80.

⁶⁸ Ibid., pp. 80, 81. Cf. The Knowledge of the Holy, op. cit., p. 122.

The holiness of God was singled out from Tozer's total doctrine of God for the purposes of this study on his doctrine of holiness. Tozer implies that this attribute of God, like the others, needs to be understood. However, natural man, though he has an innate feeling for a supreme Someone and may be aware of some of His attributes, is ignorant of God's holiness because of the Fall; therefore, the Holy Spirit and the Word of God are necessary to give him a life-changing vision of the Holy One and of his own sinfulness. The Holy One does not possess holiness, "holy" is the way He is, and holiness is His requirement for the health of the universe. His holiness is unique, unchanging and absolute; yet, He can communicate to man a relative holiness through the atonement of Christ. The problem of fellowship between sinful man and a holy God can be solved only by changing the man inwardly.

III. THE EXPERIENCE OF GOD

The first two sections of this chapter discussed "The Fact of God," that God is important in and of Himself, and "The Doctrine of God," that what man believes about God must be what is actually true of His being and character. In the latter section, God was said to have given His self-revelation in the Christian Scriptures, made real to the human heart by the Holy Spirit. "The Knowledge of the Holy," however, does not stop with knowing God exists and with knowing His attributes. This Tozer taught extensively, continually emphasizing the importance of knowing God in actual experience. After the various references in his writings to experience were gathered and examined,

broad divisions of thought appeared: (1) the definition of experience; (2) the importance of experience; (3) the reception of experience. A fourth section, the experience of holiness, was included because of its relevancy at this point.

The Definition of the Experience of God

Tozer used many different terms in defining and describing the experience of God. Perhaps, his most frequent term was "spiritual experience." He sometimes added to this the word "direct."⁶⁹ Spiritual experience is the third of three kinds of knowledge we may have in the things of God. Reason works on sense-data received from nature, faith operates upon the data of divine revelation given in the Scriptures, data which is undiscoverable by the unaided human mind, and spiritual experience is made possible by the Spirit within bringing man's spirit "into immediate contact with higher spiritual reality."⁷⁰ Its immediacy "places it beyond doubt," and its operating without reason means "the possibility of error is eliminated."⁷¹ Spiritual experience is "mystic, intuitive knowledge of God in the Spirit."⁷² Tozer used the words "mystic," or "mysticism," without much explanation, and no apology,

⁶⁹Man: The Dwelling Place of God, op. cit., pp. 49, 52.

⁷⁰Ibid. Tozer said these three kinds of knowledge were illustrated by "the outer court, holy place, and the holy of holies" of Israel's tabernacle, pp. 49, 50.

⁷¹Ibid.

⁷²"Created to Worship," The Alliance Witness, Vol. 93 (June 18, 1958), p. 13.

defining it as "that personal spiritual experience common to the saints of Bible times and well known to multitudes of persons in the post-Biblical era."⁷³ His description of "the evangelical mystic" served to describe further what he meant by the experience of God:

. . . he has been brought by the gospel into intimate fellowship with the Godhead. His theology is no less and no more than is taught in the Christian Scriptures. He walks the high road of truth where walked of old prophets and apostles, and where down the centuries walked martyrs, reformers, Puritans, evangelists and missionaries of the cross. He differs from the ordinary orthodox Christian only because he experiences his faith down in the depths of his sentient being while the other does not. He exists in a world of spiritual reality. He is quietly, deeply, and sometimes almost ecstatically aware of the Presence of God in his own nature and in the world around him. His religious experience is something elemental, as old as time and the creation. It is immediate acquaintance with God by union with the Eternal Son. It is to know that which passes knowledge.⁷⁴

The experience of God is "fellowship," "spiritual reality," awareness, and "acquaintance." It is also an "encounter" with God that is "acute," "conscious," and "arresting."⁷⁵ Whatever else spiritual experience meant for Tozer, it was summed up in the expression he used over and over again, "the Presence of God," or simply, "the Presence."⁷⁶ Indeed, ". . . the Presence of God is the central fact of Christianity."⁷⁷

⁷³The Christian Book of Mystical Verse (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Christian Publications, Inc., 1963, p. vi. Cf. "Religion of the Intellect vs Religion of the Spirit," The Alliance Weekly, Vol. 89 (March 17, 1954), p. 2.

⁷⁴The Christian Book of Mystical Verse, loc. cit. My italics.

⁷⁵The Divine Conquest, op. cit., pp. 26, 27. Cf. That Incredible Christian, op. cit., p. 91, and "Not Papal Infallibility, But the Witness," The Alliance Weekly, Vol. 91 (August 29, 1956), p. 2.

⁷⁶The Divine Conquest, op. cit., p. 26; The Pursuit of God, op. cit., p. 34; The Root of the Righteous, op. cit., pp. 92-96.

⁷⁷The Pursuit of God, op. cit., p. 37. Cf. Born After Midnight,

The Importance of the Experience of God

Tozer, as was stated previously, believed in the all-importance of God and in the necessity of knowing Him in truth. But knowing God in truth is not an intellectual knowing, though it includes that; it is knowing Him by personal, direct contact.⁷⁸ Furthermore, the experiencing of God is not some minor matter. Tozer said, "Without doubt the greatest need of the human personality is to experience God Himself."⁷⁹ There are two reasons for this, the nature of God and the nature of man:

God is the essence of intelligent, self-conscious life and man is created in His image. God is love, and man is made for God. God and man exist for each other and neither is satisfied without the other. Though God is self-sufficient He has sovereignly willed to have communion with the being He made in honor next to Himself. . . .⁸⁰

Tozer argued in his book The Divine Conquest for "the essential interiority of true religion," and expected "to show that if we would know the power of the Christian message . . . the objective Reality which is God must cross the threshold of our personality and take residence within."⁸¹ The exposition of Bible truth is imperative, but it may be done without the hearers finding God Himself in a satisfying way.⁸²

op. cit., pp. 11-14, and "Not Papal Infallibility, But the Witness," loc. cit., where Tozer discusses the "inner" or "inward" witness in relation to the knowledge of God. He seems at times to equate the two.

⁷⁸"The Lord Giveth Knowledge," The Alliance Weekly, Vol. 90 (March 16, 1955), p. 2

⁷⁹That Incredible Christian, op. cit., p. 83. ⁸⁰Ibid.

⁸¹The Divine Conquest, op. cit., p. 14. Tozer's italics.

⁸²The Pursuit of God, op. cit., pp. 8-10.

"For it is not mere words that nourish the soul, but God Himself, and unless and until the hearers find God in personal experience they are not the better for having heard the truth."⁸³ Again, Tozer said, "Personal experience must always be first in real life. The most important thing is that we experience reality by the shortest and most direct method."⁸⁴

The Reception of the Experience of God

If experiencing the actual Presence of God is crucial, how is it realized, achieved, or received? The answer to this question was found in both the preceding and subsequent material of this study. A look at the sections on "The Fact of God" and "The Doctrine of God" showed that man's experiential knowledge of God must begin with God Himself, not someone or something else, and with a correct conception of who He is and what He is like. By facing God first, we not only find out what He is like but what we are like. The vision of God shows us how unlike God we are, for He is holy and we are unholy. We are now in the dilemma of how an unholy man can experientially know the high and holy God. Tozer's answer was discussed in detail in Chapters Three and Four of the study; however, a brief statement of how man can experience God was made here also.

To experience God we must in some measure be like Him, for there can never be communion between beings who are wholly different.⁸⁵

⁸³Ibid., pp. 9, 10. Cf. The Root of the Righteous, op. cit. pp. 67-69.

⁸⁴The Divine Conquest, op. cit., p. 67.

⁸⁵That Incredible Christian, op. cit., p. 84.

The answer, therefore, to the question of how we can experience the actual Presence of God is for us to become like Him. But this faces us with two more questions, how can we become like Him and to what degree must we be like Him in order to know Him?

Tozer's answer to the first question, simply stated, is that "it is necessary . . . that we use every means of grace. . . ." ⁸⁶ In another place he said that the method for the believer to know God better is the old one: "Conscious fellowship with Christ is by faith, love, and obedience." ⁸⁷ Nor can we know God well without much thinking; for while it is true that through the intellect we know only about God, and that we only know of God in our spirit, yet,

. . . the whole Biblical revelation is addressed to the intellect and through the intellect reaches the will, the seat of the moral life; if the will responds in repentance and obedience, the Holy Spirit illuminates the penitent heart and reveals Christ, the image of God, to it. What began as an appeal to reason (Is. 1:18) ends in a spiritual experience wholly above reason. ⁸⁸

Knowing God is easy, yet difficult. The knowledge of Him is given free, but man must meet the conditions, something he does not relish as a fallen being. ⁸⁹ Tozer, in The Knowledge of the Holy, lists six Biblical conditions for knowing God: (1) "we must forsake our sins;" (2) "there must be an utter committal of the whole life to Christ in faith;" (3) "there must be a reckoning of ourselves to have died unto sin and to be alive unto God in Christ Jesus, followed by a throwing open of the entire personality to the inflow of the Holy

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 67.

⁸⁸ "The Lord Giveth Knowledge," loc. cit.

⁸⁹ The Knowledge of the Holy, op. cit., p. 122.

Spirit;" (4) there must be a bold repudiation of "the cheap values of the fallen world" and a complete detachment "in spirit from everything that unbelieving men set their hearts upon, allowing ourselves only the simplest enjoyments of nature which God has bestowed alike upon the just and the unjust;" (5) "we must practice the art of long and loving meditation upon the majesty of God;" (6) "as the knowledge of God becomes more wonderful, greater service to our fellow men will become for us imperative. This blessed knowledge is not given to be enjoyed selfishly."⁹⁰

God is personally experienced, then, by men becoming like Him by means of the intellect, the Scriptures, the Holy Spirit,⁹¹ the means of grace, repentance, faith, obedience, love, entire committal, detachment, meditation, and service. The second question raised in this section, how much like God a man must become in order to know Him, was one of the subjects in the following chapters. Before that was introduced, something was said about the experience of God as related directly to holiness.

The Experience of Holiness

Tozer believed that holiness is a spiritual experience, not just a doctrine. Whether dealing with the believer's crucifixion or his being filled with the Spirit, Tozer spoke of experience. Moses, for example, had received "formal education," "cultural training," and postgraduate work in the backside of the desert, but what he still

⁹⁰ Ibid., pp. 122, 123.

⁹¹ Supra, pp. 11, 12.

missed was "a sense of God's presence and indwelling."⁹² God became real to Moses in the burning bush experience. "God was saying, ' . . . You're a great man, Moses, but you're just a bush and your greatness is going to depend upon My fire indwelling, which shall possess you and control you and purify you.'"⁹³ Moses' experience was a purifying one, and just as the fire destroyed everything foreign to the bush but not the bush itself, so does sanctification, which is done "by the indwelling presence of the Triune God."⁹⁴ The Christian received the Holy Spirit in a measure in regeneration, Tozer said, but what he meant by "the indwelling of God in the human bosom" as the preparation for Christian work was "a more profound, a deeper and grander experience of the indwelling Christ."⁹⁵ Being filled with the Spirit is a "crisis-experience."⁹⁶ The way into this experience is by a real "experience of self-crucifixion,"⁹⁷ and, Tozer said, ". . . I doubt whether anyone ever received that divine afflatus . . . who did not first experience a period of deep anxiety and inward agitation."⁹⁸

Tozer was concerned for the relationship between knowing the doctrine of holiness, experiencing holiness, and propagating holiness.

⁹²"Spiritual Preparation for Christian Service," The Alliance Weekly, Vol. 90 (September 14, 1955), p. 3. Tozer's italics.

⁹³Ibid., p. 4.

⁹⁴Ibid., pp. 3, 4. Cf. The Pursuit of God, op. cit., pp. 38, 39.

⁹⁵"Spiritual Preparation for Christian Service," op. cit., p. 4.

⁹⁶The Divine Conquest, op. cit., p. 127.

⁹⁷Ibid., p. 126. ⁹⁸Ibid., p. 124. Tozer's italics.

Hearing about truth and hearing it inwardly are two different things, and evangelical churches are suspected of having many professors of Christianity who only know saving truth second hand. This is especially true in the deeper life churches.⁹⁹ Even where the truth of the Spirit-filled life is accepted without question ". . . there is a strange lack of inner certainty."¹⁰⁰ The preacher who speaks so glibly about the deeper life causes us to wonder whether he is speaking only about what he has heard instead of a personal experience.¹⁰¹ Also, "we are turning out from the Bible schools of this country year after year young men and women who know the theory of the Spirit-filled life but do not enjoy the experience."¹⁰² When these go into our churches, Tozer claimed, the next generation of Christians will turn out lacking experience of the Spirit's power and personal knowledge of "the inner fire."¹⁰³ The generation after that, he said, ". . . will drop even the theory."¹⁰⁴

Summary

Tozer's beliefs concerning the experience of God were summarized as follows: the experience of God is (1) a direct, personal, spiritual encounter with God that is beyond reason and faith, (2) the supreme need of man because God made man and man was made for God, (3) received through reason, faith, the means of grace, the working of the Holy

⁹⁹The Root of the Righteous, op. cit., p. 87.

¹⁰⁰Ibid., pp. 87, 88.

¹⁰¹Ibid., p. 88.

¹⁰²Ibid.

¹⁰³Ibid.

¹⁰⁴Ibid.

Spirit, and man meeting conditions, (4) a fellowship based upon man becoming like God, (5) crucial in the realm of holiness, for man must have an actual crisis of self-crucifixion and purification, and be personally filled with the Spirit, or else the hearing of the doctrine will be to no avail, the teaching of it will produce Christians void of acquaintance with the reality, and finally, the doctrine itself will be dropped.

IV. SUMMARY-CONCLUSIONS

Because Tozer placed such emphasis upon the importance of God Himself, upon the doctrine of God, and upon the necessity of experiencing God Himself, it was concluded that God was the center, circumference, and sum of his theology. From this it was also concluded that the relationship of his doctrine of holiness to his theology as a whole was one of subordination.

CHAPTER III

"MAN: THE DWELLING PLACE OF GOD"¹

In making God the center, circumference, and sum of his theology, Tozer avoided the heresy which he said could be seen in the thought and practice of much contemporary Christianity, that of beginning with man's needs, then looking for God.² This did not mean he neglected the doctrine of man, rather, his doctrine of God led directly into his concept of man's nature and needs. Consequently, this study of Tozer's doctrine of holiness proceeded along the path he took, beginning with God and then considering man.

The previous chapter about God noted His uniqueness, but also said that He created a moral being, called man, who was capable of knowing Him. Knowing Him involved more than intellectual apprehension of His being and character, it meant actually experiencing Him personally. Sin, however, introduced the dilemma of how an unholy man could fellowship with an infinitely holy God. This brief discussion of man in relation to God has been expanded in the present chapter under the following headings: (1) The Nature and Purpose of Man; (2) The Predicament of Man; (3) The Provision for Man; (4) The Call of God and The Response of Man; (5) The Beginning of the Restoration of Man.

¹Man: The Dwelling Place of God (Harrisburg, Pa.: Christian Publications, Inc., 1966), p. 9.

²Supra, p. 6.

I. THE NATURE AND PURPOSE OF MAN

Tozer's writings were permeated with what he felt were two foundational truths: (1) man was created in the image of God; (2) man was created to worship.³

The Nature of Man

Such great importance did Tozer attach to the truth of man being created in the image of God, that he said, "I do not believe it possible to over-emphasize this doctrine."⁴

Man's divine origin means he has something in him which, in spite of the damage done to it by sin in the Fall, makes him have an affinity for God.⁵ He agreed with Meister Eckhart that of all creatures in the universe, man is the most like God.⁶ Man's likeness to God now, however, does not reside in his moral image, for "Sin has marred the image, and instead of being like God we are tragically unlike Him

³"Created to Worship," The Alliance Witness, Vol. 93 (June 18, 1958), pp. 3, 4. Cf. "What's in the Bible that People Today Ought to Know About?," The Alliance Witness, Vol. 97 (September 5, 1962), p. 3; "A Place Where Thine Honor Dwelleth," The Alliance Weekly, Vol. 90 (January 12, 1955), p. 4; "What the Advent Established," The Alliance Witness, Vol. 94 (December 16, 1959), p. 2; The Tozer Pulpit, comp. Gerald B. Smith (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Christian Publications, Inc., 1967), I, p. 18; The Root of the Righteous (Harrisburg, Pa.: Christian Publications, Inc., 1955), p. 98.

⁴"A Sermon for Communion Sunday," The Alliance Weekly, Vol. 87 (September 3, 1952), p. 567.

⁵Ibid., p. 568.

⁶Ibid., pp. 567 and "Created to Worship," op. cit., p. 4.

in the holiness of His character. Likeness to God lies rather in a similarity of substance."⁷ God is a spirit, and He created man a spiritual being. His purpose in redemption is to restore to man the divine image, and man's real nature being spirit, not body, he is "susceptible of reclamation and full restoration to God. . . ."⁸ Because man was made in the image of God, and bears even now a likeness to Deity, he should not have a low concept of his worth, nor give himself to sin and the devil. He should not feel humble before an angel, but only before God. He should not be ashamed of his humanity, but only of his sin.⁹ Man is sinful, it is true; but, God loves him because He sees in him a being who still retains a likeness to Himself, a likeness that is nearer to the eternal God than any created thing.¹⁰

The Purpose of Man

That God created man in His own image explains the origin and nature of man, but why was man created? Tozer answered in various

⁷"A Sermon for Communion Sunday," op. cit., p. 568. Cf. Man: The Dwelling Place of God, op. cit., p. 10.

⁸Born After Midnight (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Christian Publications, Inc., 1959), p. 20. Cf. "A Sermon for Communion Sunday," loc. cit., and "Created to Worship," op. cit., p. 3. He said in "What the Advent Established," loc. cit., that the Incarnation established that man's origin is divine. God could not incarnate Himself in a being wholly flesh or even essentially flesh. For God and man to unite they must be to some degree like each other.

⁹"A Place Where Thine Honor Dwelleth," loc. cit. and "Created to Worship," op. cit., p. 4.

¹⁰The Root of the Righteous, loc. cit. Cf. The Tozer Pulpit, I, op. cit., pp. 18-20.

ways, one of which was found in The Pursuit of God: "God formed us for His pleasure, and so formed us that we as well as He can in divine communion enjoy the sweet and mysterious mingling of kindred personalities."¹¹ In another place he put it more simply: God made man to worship.¹² Man's yearning to worship and his ability to worship, he said, come from his being created in the image of God.¹³ Furthermore,

This great central fact has been largely forgotten today, not by the liberals and the cults only, but by evangelical Christians as well. By direct teaching, by story, by example, by psychological pressure we force our new converts to 'go to work for the Lord.' Ignoring the fact that God has redeemed them to make worshipers out of them, we thrust them out into 'service,' quite as if the Lord were recruiting laborers for a project instead of seeking to restore moral beings to a condition where they can glorify God and enjoy Him forever.¹⁴

That there is work to do, Tozer did not deny; but, his insistence was that the worker must first be a worshiper.¹⁵

God's Temple

Taken together, man's nature and his reason for existing added up to this teaching found again and again in Tozer's writings: man is the "dwelling place of God."¹⁶ Two passages from the same editorial

¹¹The Pursuit of God (Harrisburg, Pa.: Christian Publications, Inc., 1948), p. 34. Cf. Man: The Dwelling Place of God, op. cit., p. 58.

¹²"Created to Worship," op. cit., p. 3. Cf. Born After Midnight, op. cit., p. 123.

¹³"Created to Worship," op. cit., pp. 3, 4, and "A Sermon for Communion Sunday," op. cit., p. 568. Cf. That Incredible Christian (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Christian Publications, Inc., 1964), p. 125.

¹⁴Born After Midnight, op. cit., p. 125. ¹⁵Ibid.

¹⁶Man: The Dwelling Place of God, op. cit., p. 9.

illustrate that man, being what he is, a spirit created by God, is by nature God's temple and was created for the express purpose of being indwelt by Him:

Deep inside every man there is a private sanctum where dwells the mysterious essence of his being. This far-in reality is that in the man which is what it is of itself without reference to any other part of man's complex nature. It is the man's 'I Am,' a gift from the I AM who created him.¹⁷

At the far-in hidden center of man's being is a bush fitted to be the dwelling place of the Triune God. There God planned to rest and glow with moral and spiritual fire.¹⁸

Tozer reiterated this theme of God's indwelling in various terms, of which worship, the Presence, communion, and fellowship were the most frequent.¹⁹ For him, man being created in God's image and God living within produced a growing, reciprocal relationship based upon love, obedience, understanding, trust, and communion.²⁰

In summary, Tozer emphasized first the importance of God, and, next, the relationship between God and the only being most like Him, which is man. He believed that man was meant to be indwelt by God and to respond in worship.

II. THE PREDICAMENT OF MAN

Although Tozer held a high view of man's nature and purpose, he did not teach what had become a popular doctrine in his day, the

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 10.

¹⁹"Created to Worship," op. cit., p. 3ff; The Pursuit of God, op. cit., pp. 34-39, 61-71; The Divine Conquest (Harrisburg, Pa.: Christian Publications, Inc., 1950), pp. 26, 27; That Incredible Christian, op. cit., pp. 37, 67; "Created to Worship," op. cit., p. 13.

²⁰The Knowledge of the Holy (New York: Harper and Brothers

basic goodness of man.²¹ Rather, he described man as living in a great predicament: the one who is like God in one way (that he is a spirit) is totally unlike God in another; he is morally unholy and alienated from his Creator.²² His predicament involves guilt, perverseness, and loss, all of which are the result of his own doing.

Man's Guilt

Man rebelled against the Most High, disobeyed, ceased to love God, chose to take his life into his own control, and set up his own throne to sit upon it himself.²³ He is held accountable for his sins and the results of them because he was given the ability to know good and evil. Thus his responsibility is in two areas: he is "morally obliged to choose the good and reject the evil," at the same time facing judgment for not choosing the good; and in view of the cure provided in Christ, he is responsible for seeking ". . . forgiveness and cleansing at the fountain opened for men by the hard dying of Jesus Christ

Publishers, 1961), p. 123; Man: The Dwelling Place of God, op. cit., p. 59; The Pursuit of God, op. cit., pp. 71, 107; That Incredible Christian, op. cit., pp. 83-85.

²¹The Root of the Righteous, op. cit., p. 58.

²²"A Sermon for Communion Sunday," op. cit., p. 568; The Root of the Righteous, op. cit., p. 59; "What's in the Bible that People Today Ought to Know About?," op. cit., p. 3.

²³The Pursuit of God, op. cit., pp. 34, 35; "What's in the Bible that People Today Ought to Know About?," loc. cit.; "Eating the Locoweed," The Alliance Weekly, Vol. 92 (December 11, 1957), p. 2; "A Place Where Thine Honor Dwelleth," op. cit., p. 3.

on the Roman cross."²⁴ He is guilty for the sins he has committed and will be judged. This is part of his predicament.²⁵

Man's Alienation

A second part of man's predicament is his alienation from God. He suffered the loss of God and became lost. God condemned him to hell for his sin, the only place for which he was fit, and left the human sanctuary, with the result that man now dwells alone in his soul.²⁶ The tragedy of losing God was more than a passing concern for Tozer, as was seen by the following passages:

I repeat, the mightiest calamity that has visited the world is that we have lost our worship. Man is the genius of the strings; God made him so. Our ability to fellowship God [sic], to know God, is His gift to us in creation.²⁷

So the life of man upon the earth is a life away from the Presence, wrenched loose from that 'blissful center' which is our right and proper dwelling place, our first estate which we kept not, the loss of which is the cause of our unceasing restlessness.²⁸

²⁴"Eating the Locoweed," loc. cit.

²⁵Tozer condemned the doctrine of antinomianism, the practice of blaming the devil for everything, the idea "that sinners are not lost because they have sinned, but because they have not accepted Jesus," and "the teaching that men are so weak by nature that they are unable to keep the law of God." Paths to Power (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Christian Publications, Inc., n.d.), pp. 25-31. He believed in personal guilt and responsibility based upon free choice and ability.

²⁶Man: The Dwelling Place of God, op. cit., p. 10; "What's in the Bible that People Today Ought to Know About?," loc. cit.; "The 'Ground of the Soul'," The Alliance Weekly, Vol. 87 (May 7, 1951), p. 290.

²⁷"Created to Worship," op. cit., p. 13.

²⁸The Pursuit of God, op. cit., p. 35.

In fact, the restoration of God to the heart was more important to Tozer than rescue from hell, for he said, "Now the gospel, of course, saves us from hell; but that was never the primary purpose of God in redeeming man. His purpose is to save us unto Himself."²⁹ Continuing, he stated:

I believe in hell and I believe in the eternity of hell, but I believe that redeemed people ought to get beyond the place where they are always talking about the fact that they were saved from hell. We are saved unto His divine fellowship. That's what matters, after all.³⁰

Man's Perverseness

By perverseness was meant the things Tozer said when picturing the fallen human nature. Man is far from what is right, in practice and nature. Two passages served to show the existence of a bent toward sin, and its manifestations, as he saw it. He described depravity as a veil "woven of the fine threads of the self-life, the hyphenated sins of the human spirit . . . self-righteousness, self-pity, self-confidence, self-sufficiency, self-admiration, self-love and a host of others like them."³¹ The second passage was, "The human heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. It must have help from outside itself, from above itself, if it is to escape the gravitational pull of its own sinful nature."³² More was said about depravity and man's predicament in the next chapter.

²⁹"Created to Worship," loc. cit. ³⁰Ibid.

³¹The Pursuit of God, op. cit., p. 45.

³²The Root of the Righteous, op. cit., p. 59.

Before going to the next section, several other things Tozer said about sin were helpful in understanding man's predicament. First, sin has distorted man's moral judgment so that he sees good as evil and evil as good, chooses time over eternity, and earth instead of heaven.³³ An act of sin, Tozer believed, was done in a state of momentary blindness to reality:

Sin, I repeat, in addition to anything else it may be, is always an act of wrong judgment. To commit a sin a man must for the moment believe that things are different from what they really are . . . he must act as if he had no soul and was not accountable for his moral choices.³⁴

Secondly, sin is real and will not go away by itself. Nothing invented by the devil or men can make the mind forget it.³⁵ "Sin is still the world's first problem."³⁶ Thirdly, Tozer said,

One convincing proof of our inherent badness is the way we manage to turn good into evil and make our very blessings a curse to us. Indeed I think a strong case can be made for the belief that sin is merely righteousness in reverse and evil but perverted good. Sin is at bottom the abuse of things in themselves innocent, an illegitimate use of legitimate gifts.³⁷

Lastly, man may waste himself by sinning, and thereby waste the treasure that is the most precious among all treasures. He wastes what is

³³"Eating the Locoweed," loc. cit. Cf. "The Way of True Greatness," The Alliance Weekly, Vol. 92 (July 10, 1957), p. 2.

³⁴Man: The Dwelling Place of God, op. cit., p. 47.

³⁵Ibid., p. 118; "It Will Not Go Away," The Alliance Weekly, Vol. 86 (October 3, 1951), p. 610.

³⁶"It Will Not Go Away," loc. cit.

³⁷"Evangelical Snobbery," The Alliance Witness, Vol. 97 (November 28, 1962), p. 2.

closest to God's likeness among all things on earth. "This is man's greatest tragedy, God's heaviest grief."³⁸

Slavery to the perversion of his nature and the possibility of throwing away his precious God-breathed self, in addition to his guilt and alienation from God, put man the divine creation into a great predicament, a self-caused predicament. This is what Tozer taught.

III. THE PROVISION FOR MAN

Tozer taught the tragic fact of the Fall and its consequences, as was seen in this passage:

So the Fall was a moral crisis but it has affected every part of man's nature, moral, intellectual, psychological, spiritual and physical. His whole being has been deeply injured; the sin in his heart has overflowed into his total life, affecting his relation to God, to his fellow men and to everyone and everything that touches him.³⁹

Man, he said the Scriptures declare, is lost.⁴⁰ He was quick to say, however, that there is another fact which has been declared, "man is lost, but not abandoned."⁴¹ God has done something about man's predicament. Considering this statement, should someone ask the question, "how can a just God help a condemned sinner?" Tozer provided two answers.

³⁸The Root of the Righteous, op. cit., p. 99.

³⁹Born After Midnight, op. cit., p. 29. Cf. That Incredible Christian, op. cit., p. 10⁴.

⁴⁰The Tozer Pulpit, I, op. cit., p. 16.

⁴¹"What the Advent Established," loc. cit. Cf. The Tozer Pulpit, I, loc. cit.; Born After Midnight, op. cit., pp. 29, 30.

The first was found in the doctrine of God. He pointed out that God's attributes are never in conflict, therefore, justice in no way forbids mercy to be exercised. "God's compassion flows out of His goodness, and goodness without justice is not goodness. God spares us because He is good, but He could not be good if He were not just."⁴² He referred to Anselm who said that the wicked are punished because they deserve it, but that when they are spared it is because of God's goodness. Whatever He does He does "as the supremely good God."⁴³

The second answer, Tozer said, is the simpler one. The just God can remain consistent with His character because of redemption.⁴⁴

Tozer's position was summed up in his explanation of the Christian doctrine of redemption:

. . . through the work of Christ in atonement, justice is not violated but satisfied when God spares a sinner. Redemptive theology teaches that mercy does not become effective toward a man until justice has done its work. The just penalty for sin was exacted when Christ our Substitute died for us on the cross.⁴⁵

Thus, the blood of Christ enables God to look upon a trusting man as if he had never sinned.⁴⁶

⁴²The Knowledge of the Holy, op. cit., p. 94.

⁴³Ibid.

⁴⁴Ibid.

⁴⁵Ibid. Cf. Born After Midnight, op. cit., p. 137 and That Incredible Christian, op. cit., p. 32.

⁴⁶The Root of the Righteous, op. cit., p. 15. Cf. "The Christian's Witness to the World," The Alliance Witness, Vol. 93 (January 1, 1958), p. 8.

That God can look upon a man as if he had never sinned does not mean, however, that God can have fellowship with him. A man who has been declared free from the penalty of the law was so declared through the satisfaction of justice, but God's holy character will not allow Him to admit an unholy man into communion with Himself.⁴⁷ The questions in Chapter One of the study were raised again at this point: "How can an unholy man know a holy God?" "How can an unholy man become holy so that he can know God?" "How holy must a man be in order to know God?"⁴⁸ The answers to these questions, which pertained directly to Tozer's doctrine of holiness, were discussed in part in the present chapter under the heading "The Beginning of the Restoration of Man," and in the fourth chapter titled "'The Pursuit of God' and 'The Divine Conquest'." Prior to answering these, however, the problem of how the benefits of the atonement are transferred to man was pursued, for Tozer said,

Redemption is an objective fact. It is a work potentially saving, wrought for man, but done independent of and exterior to the individual. Christ's work on Calvary made atonement for every man, but it did not save any man.⁴⁹

IV. THE CALL OF GOD AND THE RESPONSE OF MAN

The atonement of Christ is made personally effective⁵⁰ for the individual only after two things have taken place: God's call and man's response.

⁴⁷Supra, pp. 14, 15, 20. ⁴⁸Supra, pp. 21, 22.

⁴⁹Paths to Power, op. cit., p. 9. Cf. "What's in the Bible that People Today Ought to Know About?" op. cit., p. 4.

⁵⁰Paths to Power, loc. cit., and The Divine Conquest, op. cit., p. 48.

The Call of God

Tozer believed modern Christians needed to see again the sovereignty of God, not only as a doctrine ". . . but as the source of a solemn religious emotion."⁵¹ He continued,

We need to have taken from our dying hand the shadow scepter with which we fancy we rule the world. We need to feel and know that we are but dust and ashes, and that God is the disposer of the destinies of men.⁵²

While admitting the deep mystery of God's call, ". . . a complete misunderstanding of the noble and true doctrine of the freedom of the human will . . .,"⁵³ Tozer thought, makes salvation ". . . to depend perilously upon the will of man instead of upon the will of God."⁵⁴

What, then, was the right view of human freedom and divine sovereignty?

Tozer's answer lay in the concepts of "master choice" and "secondary choice." The first was always God's; the second was man's. He said, "Salvation is from our side a choice, from the divine side it is a seizing upon, an apprehending, a conquest by the Most High God. Our 'accepting' and 'willing' are reactions rather than actions."⁵⁵ God's part must not be minimized. Man's part must not be ignored either, Tozer said, as he pointed to the "mental confusion and moral inaction among

⁵¹The Divine Conquest, op. cit., p. 51.

⁵²Ibid.

⁵³Ibid., p. 48.

⁵⁴Ibid.

⁵⁵Ibid., p. 49. Tozer's italics. Tozer taught that no man could be saved without the work of the Spirit. He believed in prevenient grace, as was seen in "The Marks of God's Chosen," The Alliance Witness, Vol. 94 (November 4, 1959), p. 2.

Christians" who failed to distinguish between what God alone can do and what man must do.⁵⁶

The Response of Man

Repentance and faith were Tozer's doctrinal beliefs concerning the proper response of the sinner to God's call to salvation. He took special care, however, to do two things: to define what he thought was the true Biblical meaning of these beliefs and to criticize fallacious views. He felt that wrong concepts of repentance and faith were injurious to the seeker after salvation.⁵⁷

The response of man in repentance. The following is a summary of his basic teachings about repentance:

1. Repentance is a work which only man of his own free will can do; God cannot do it for him.⁵⁸

2. Repentance is a change of mind, but it also involves deep contrition, a sense of sin that breaks and defeats a man and makes him feel personally responsible for Christ's crucifixion.⁵⁹

⁵⁶Paths to Power, op. cit., p. 10.

⁵⁷Ibid., pp. 10 ff.; Man: The Dwelling Place of God, op. cit., pp. 18, 29, 33, 36, 60, 64, 102, 103, 142; That Incredible Christian, pp. 17-19; The Root of the Righteous, op. cit., pp. 45-51; Born After Midnight, op. cit., pp. 15-18; The Knowledge of the Holy, op. cit., p. 98; "Faith is a Continuous Act," The Alliance Weekly, Vol. 87 (February 6, 1952), p. 82; "As Many as Received Him" The Alliance Weekly, Vol. 89 (April 21, 1954), p. 4.

⁵⁸Paths to Power, op. cit., pp. 10-12; That Incredible Christian, op. cit., pp. 29-31.

⁵⁹Man: The Dwelling Place of God, op. cit., pp. 102, 103; Cf. p. 18.

3. "Repentance is primarily a change of moral purpose, a sudden and often violent reversal of the soul's direction."⁶⁰ It involves obedience; ". . . it is a determination to begin now to do the will of God as He reveals it to us."⁶¹

4. Repentance is forsaking sin.⁶²

5. Repentance is necessary for the reception of God's gift of faith.⁶³

6. Repentance is necessary for receiving pardon.⁶⁴

In summary, the key idea in Tozer's description of repentance seemed to be that repentance was not merely a mental act, but that it was a forsaking of sin and a determined desire to live a life in obedience to God.

The response of man in faith. There is a similarity between Tozer's doctrines of faith and repentance. For example, both repentance and faith are acts of man's free will.⁶⁵ His doctrine of faith was summarized as follows:

1. Faith is a gift of God subsequent to repentance.⁶⁶

2. Faith is confidence in God and Christ.⁶⁷

⁶⁰Ibid., p. 36.

⁶¹Ibid., p. 33.

⁶²Ibid., p. 64; Paths to Power, op. cit., p. 11.

⁶³"The Faith We Live By," The Alliance Weekly, Vol. 89 (September 8, 1954), p. 3.

⁶⁴Man: The Dwelling Place of God, op. cit., p. 64.

⁶⁵Paths to Power, op. cit., pp. 10, 12.

⁶⁶Man: The Dwelling Place of God, op. cit., pp. 29, 33.

⁶⁷Ibid., p. 33; That Incredible Christian, op. cit., pp. 26-28.

3. Faith is a free choice by man.⁶⁸
4. Faith is based upon knowledge of God's character and person as revealed in the Bible.⁶⁹
5. Faith is the result of the Spirit's inworking.⁷⁰
6. Faith and obedience (morals) are inseparable. Faith brings a change of life.⁷¹
7. Faith is truly faith when it is active rather than passive.⁷²
8. Faith that is "true faith" brings ". . . an inward witness that cannot be mistaken."⁷³
9. Faith is a continual attitude, a journey, not just a once-for-all act.⁷⁴
10. Faith is the total man, intellect, will, and emotions, attaching himself to "the whole Christ,"⁷⁵ His person and work.⁷⁶

⁶⁸Paths to Power, op. cit., p. 12.

⁶⁹Ibid.; Man: The Dwelling Place of God, op. cit., pp. 32, 33; That Incredible Christian, op. cit., pp. 22, 27.

⁷⁰Man: The Dwelling Place of God, op. cit., p. 33.

⁷¹Paths to Power, op. cit., pp. 15-19; Man: The Dwelling Place of God, op. cit., pp. 30-33, 61.

⁷²Man: The Dwelling Place of God, op. cit., p. 61; "As Many as Received Him," The Alliance Weekly, Vol. 89 (April 21, 1954), p. 4.

⁷³Man: The Dwelling Place of God, loc. cit. Cf. Born After Midnight, op. cit., pp. 11-14.

⁷⁴Ibid., pp. 15-18; "Faith is a Continuous Act," op. cit., p. 2; That Incredible Christian, op. cit., pp. 23-25.

⁷⁵Ibid., p. 19.

⁷⁶Ibid., pp. 17-19; Man: The Dwelling Place of God, op. cit., p. 142.

11. Faith rests upon the character of God and asks no further proof for the trustworthiness of His word; faith based upon reason is a kind of faith, but it is not Biblical faith.⁷⁷ Biblical faith is faith in God Himself.⁷⁸

In summary, faith for Tozer was an active, continual committal of the whole man in trust and obedience to God and Jesus Christ. It was both a gift from God and an act of man.

As these two matters are considered together, it is clear that the dominant element in Tozer's doctrine of repentance and faith was found to be change. He insisted that true repentance and true faith involve basically an actual change of purpose and conduct from sin to righteousness, from an old life to a new life, from disobedience to obedience. The element of change, which was first found to be important in his teaching about man's response to God's call, was found to be important also in his understanding of what God's response was to man's repentance and faith. God's work following man's response was discussed under the next section, "The Beginning of the Restoration of Man."

V. THE BEGINNING OF THE RESTORATION OF MAN

Introduction

Tozer taught that it is by God's enablement and call that man receives the opportunity to repent and believe. When he has met these two conditions, God again works. God's work after man has met the

⁷⁷Ibid., pp. 31, 32; That Incredible Christian, op. cit., pp. 26-28.

⁷⁸Ibid., p. 28.

conditions has received different designations by Christians, some of which are "conversion," "being saved," "being born again," "the first work of grace." By the use of these terms and others, Christians have shown their belief that a number of things happen simultaneously when God meets the repenting, believing sinner. These things are, in theological terms, justification, adoption, regeneration, and sanctification. Some doctrinal systems have attached the word "initial" to the word sanctification for the purpose of distinguishing what they believed was the cleansing of acquired depravity in "the first work of grace," from what they called "entire sanctification," an experience subsequent to a person's first encounter with Christ. Tozer's beliefs about sanctification were treated in the next chapter. It was found, however, that he did not seem to deal with the concepts of acquired depravity and initial sanctification under those terms. It was concluded, therefore, that in discussing what God does for the believing sinner in the initial contact, Tozer either ignored sanctification as not important, or he did not believe in it, or perhaps he included it in his doctrine of regeneration, without explanation. Of the remaining three doctrines, justification, adoption, and regeneration, regeneration was what Tozer emphasized the most, as the study has revealed. Since it received the most treatment by him, it has been given the greater emphasis here; justification has been discussed only when it has been pertinent for clarifying his doctrine of regeneration.

Regeneration and the Divine Nature

Tozer described regeneration as an act of God which restores the divine nature to the heart of man:⁷⁹ men ". . . become Christians only by an invasion of their nature by the Spirit of God in the New Birth";⁸⁰ regeneration is by a "supreme act of God";⁸¹ Christ enters man's regenerated nature,⁸² and from Him man receives the nature of God.⁸³ Thus, Tozer's doctrine of God and man (with their emphases upon God creating man for inner-communion with Himself and upon man forfeiting that communion through sin) was logically followed by Tozer's emphasis upon God's re-entrance into man's nature.

Regeneration: a New Beginning

While Tozer focused upon regeneration as the most important work in conversion, and while he defined it as a restoring of the divine nature of God to man's heart, he plainly pointed out that regeneration was a beginning, not an end. He said,

. . . now begins the glorious pursuit, the heart's happy exploration of the infinite riches of the Godhead. That is where we begin, I say, but where we stop no man has yet discovered, for there is

⁷⁹Man: The Dwelling Place of God, op. cit., pp. 10, 11; Born After Midnight, op. cit., p. 122.

⁸⁰The Divine Conquest, op. cit., p. 113. Cf. "Created to Worship," op. cit., p. 13.

⁸¹Man: The Dwelling Place of God, op. cit., p. 11.

⁸²"God's Greatest Gift to Man," The Alliance Witness, Vol. 15 (July 24, 1963), p. 11.

⁸³Ibid. Cf. "As Many as Received Him," op. cit., p. 3 for the use of the term "mystic birth."

in the awful and mysterious depths of the Triune God neither limit nor end.⁸⁴

The new born soul is like a new born baby, far from being complete, and can yet, by placing himself in worthy or "unworthy hands," become "a man of God," or ". . . of little use to mankind and a poor example of the skill of the heavenly Potter."⁸⁵ Regeneration is the beginning of restoring man to the divine image. Following the new birth, man's total life is to be brought into harmony with the divine image " . . . by the Word and by prayer and discipline and suffering."⁸⁶

Regeneration: a Change

Although regeneration is followed by progressive moral change, Tozer emphatically stated that the act of God regenerating the soul causes an immediate moral change as well. Justification, he said, has been taught, with grave consequences, as simply ". . . a 'not guilty' verdict pronounced by the Heavenly Father upon a sinner who can present the magic coin faith with the wondrous 'open-sesame' engraved upon it."⁸⁷ If not said that bluntly, the teaching creates that impression.⁸⁸

⁸⁴The Pursuit of God, op. cit., p. 14.

⁸⁵Born After Midnight, op. cit., pp. 127, 128.

⁸⁶Of God and Men (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Christian Publications, Inc., 1960), p. 67. Cf. That Incredible Christian, op. cit., p. 16; Man: The Dwelling Place of God, op. cit., pp. 61, 62.

⁸⁷The Divine Conquest, op. cit., p. 37. Tozer described the "grave consequences" here and in Man: The Dwelling Place of God, op. cit., p. 65.

⁸⁸The Divine Conquest, loc. cit.

Tozer knew the distinction between justification and regeneration, but, he said, ". . . they can never be experienced apart in fact. When God declares a man righteous He instantly sets about to make him righteous."⁸⁹ The sinner is no longer a sinner after he is saved,⁹⁰ for "the power of the gospel changes him, shifts the basis of his life from self to Christ, faces him about in a new direction and makes him a new creation."⁹¹ The gospel effects a change that means a totally new life, part of which are new motives and new interests.⁹² Emotional or intellectual changes are not enough. A radical change is needed,⁹³ and until a "re-birth" has taken place, the gospel "has not done a saving work within the soul."⁹⁴ Revival includes ". . . a return to the belief that real faith invariable produces holiness of heart and righteousness of life."⁹⁵

Regeneration and Holiness

From the previous section on the moral change brought about by regeneration, the conclusion was made that Tozer saw regeneration as a work of holiness, though he did not use the words "holy" or "holiness"

⁸⁹Man: The Dwelling Place of God, loc. cit.

⁹⁰The Divine Conquest, op. cit., p. 36.

⁹¹Ibid., pp. 36, 37. Cf. The Tozer Pulpit, Vol. I, op. cit., pp. 11, 13.

⁹²The Divine Conquest, op. cit., p. 34.

⁹³Ibid., pp. 31, 34.

⁹⁴Ibid., p. 34.

⁹⁵Man: The Dwelling Place of God, loc. cit.

very often in that connection. In his book Of God and Men he pointed out that God always acts consistently with Himself.⁹⁶ Since this is the case, He acted no differently in the Incarnation than in eternity, and when He enters man He continues to act like Himself, according to His holiness: "This is the method by which He makes the redeemed man holy. He enters a human nature at regeneration as He once entered human nature at the incarnation and acts as becomes God, using that nature as a medium of expression for His moral perfections."⁹⁷ In at least two places he also seemed to indicate that regeneration, or the total work in conversion, produces a desire for holiness.⁹⁸ Regeneration, however, does not mean the end of the believer's troubles. For while he possesses the divine nature, desires holiness, and is progressing toward the goal of harmony with the divine image, he still has a struggle with the old sin nature.⁹⁹ Tozer's description of the regenerated man's struggle, and the cure, has been covered in Chapter Four.

Summary

In discussing the results of the initial encounter between the believing sinner and the calling God, Tozer singled out the importance of regeneration. He spoke of regeneration as meaning an instantaneous

⁹⁶Of God and Men, op. cit., p. 58.

⁹⁷Ibid., p. 59.

⁹⁸"The Day of the Drought," The Alliance Weekly, Vol. 85 (November 4, 1950), p. 694, and That Incredible Christian, op. cit., p. 64.

⁹⁹Ibid., pp. 40, 42.

moral change, a receiving of God into the heart, a making of a new life, a starting in the direction of becoming like God in all of life, a producing of the desire for holiness.

VI. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary of Chapter Three

Tozer's view of man's relationship to God in this chapter was summarized by the following points:

1. God made man a spiritual being like Himself.
2. God made man a dwelling place for Himself.
3. God made man so that he could glorify and enjoy God forever, and so that God could love him.
4. Man chose to rebel against God.
5. Man is guilty for his sins and liable to judgment.
6. Man is morally responsible to choose the right.
7. God departed from man as His dwelling place.
8. Man is still like God as to substance.
9. Man is void of the Presence of God.
10. Man is totally unholy and has a perverse, antagonistic nature.
11. God in Christ paid the price to redeem man to Himself.
12. God calls helpless and darkened man to Himself by the Holy Spirit.
13. Man must choose to respond to God's call through repentance and faith in order for God's provision of salvation to become personally effective.

14. Man's repentance and faith involve a real change of attitude and practice from sin to righteousness, and a commitment to obey and trust God and Christ.

15. Upon man's response of repentance and faith, God does several things for him, among which are justification and regeneration.

16. God's regeneration of man is of prime importance.

17. God, in regenerating man, enters him again and restores to him the divine nature, puts in him the desire for holiness, gives him new life which makes him a new creature, changes him morally within by an instantaneous work, and starts him on the way of progressively becoming like Himself.

Conclusions of Chapter Three

In view of Tozer's emphasis upon man as the dwelling place of God, the following conclusions were made:

1. Tozer believed in the importance of man's relationship to God his creator, and included it as an integral part of his theology.

2. Tozer believed that the relationship between God and man was personal and intimate.

3. Tozer believed that the breaking of the intimate communion between God and man was the most tragic result of the Fall.

4. Tozer believed that the restoration of the relationship between God and man was to be total, but that the moral and personal aspects were more important than the legal.

5. Tozer believed that the restoration of man to be again the dwelling place of God was primary.

In addition, in view of Tozer's teaching that fallen and corrupt man was made actually righteous in regeneration, that he then began to desire holiness, and that he also began progressing toward God-likeness, the following conclusion was made: Tozer believed that holiness began in regeneration.

CHAPTER IV

"THE PURSUIT OF GOD" AND "THE DIVINE CONQUEST"

To this point, the study has established the following main ideas in Tozer's theology: (1) God Himself is all-important; (2) God made man in His own image for Himself; (3) man, meant to be God's dwelling place and to glorify and enjoy Him forever, forfeited his relationship to God legally, morally, and experientially; (4) God has provided redemption through Christ Jesus to restore man fully; (5) God calls man to receive back his responsibilities and privileges; (6) man must by free choice repent and believe on Christ in order to be restored to his relationship to God; (7) God responds to man's response by clearing him of guilt and future judgment, and by entering his inner-being to give him a new moral life, a life that is ever-increasing in God-likeness. The second chapter stated that God was the center, circumference, and sum of Tozer's theology. This did not mean his theology spoke only of God. Chapter Three established the reciprocal relationship of God and man. The main ideas of those two chapters, therefore, led to the expression of Tozer's theology in three words: God indwelling man. Whether he looked back to the beginning, or to the present, or to the future, all meaning for life was wrapped up in this main theme, God and man were, are, and always will be meant for each other. The glory of creation was God and man in communion, the glory of redemption was God and man in reunion for communion, and the glory of the end of the age will be God and man in full and perfect fellowship forever.

As was noted at the close of the last chapter, the work of God in man through reconciliation and regeneration was not, however, the complete and perfect restoration of man to God and God to man. Tozer believed that experience and Scripture taught two truths: regenerated man's relationship to God is one of increasing knowledge; and, the regenerated man needs another definite experience with God. Two of his books dealt with these two truths in detail, The Pursuit of God and The Divine Conquest.¹ The former book's theme was the regenerated soul's never ending pursuit of God Himself. Nor was the theme contained in this book alone, but continually appeared in Tozer's other works, as the documentation of this chapter showed. The Divine Conquest was about God's invasion of man's nature, especially in filling the regenerated man with His Spirit. This theme also permeated Tozer's other writings. The present chapter of the study summarized in detail these two ideas, man's pursuit of God and God's conquest of man.

I. "THE PURSUIT OF GOD" BEGUN

Introduction

What Tozer meant when he wrote about man pursuing God was the spiritual hunger of a regenerated person to know God in an intimate and satisfying experience, and his exploration of the riches of the Triune God, an exploration with no known end.² To the lack of a strong desire

¹The Pursuit of God (Harrisburg, Pa.: Christian Publications, Inc., 1948). The Divine Conquest (Harrisburg, Pa.: Christian Publications, Inc., 1950).

²The Pursuit of God, op. cit., pp. 7, 10, 14.

after God Tozer attributed the "present low estate" and "the stiff and wooden quality about our religious lives. . . ." ³ He said, "Church people habitually approach the matter of their personal relation to God in a dull, half-hearted way which is altogether out of keeping with their general temperament and wholly inconsistent with the importance of the subject." ⁴ The spirituality of evangelicalism is at a low level, according to Tozer, for

we have measured ourselves by ourselves until the incentive to seek higher plateaus in the things of the Spirit is all but gone. Large and influential sections of the world of fundamental Christianity have gone overboard for practices wholly unscriptural, altogether unjustifiable in the light of historic Christian truth and deeply damaging to the inner life of the individual Christian. ⁵

Bible saints and those who followed were not advocates of the dispose-of-everything-at-once-in-the-initial-encounter-with-Christ doctrine that is promoted today. ⁶ "They mourned for Him, they prayed and wrestled and sought for Him day and night, in season and out, and when they found Him the finding was all the sweeter for the long seeking." ⁷ Tozer insisted that better Christians must be produced. Though this kind of talk is strange to many, who think all Christians are the same because they have been justified, forgiven, and adopted into God's

³Ibid., p. 17.

⁴Of God and Men (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Christian Publications, 1960), p. 8.

⁵Ibid., pp. 12, 13.

⁶The Root of the Righteous (Harrisburg, Pa.: Christian Publications, Inc., 1955), p. 11; The Pursuit of God, op. cit., pp. 15-17; Born After Midnight (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Christian Publications, Inc., 1959), pp. 15, 16.

⁷The Pursuit of God, op. cit., p. 15.

family, the truth is that the Christian is supposed to be growing.⁸ Christians will admit, when faced with it, that they have experienced little of their rich inheritance in Christ, that although they have read about the fervent longings after God of great saints and have for awhile desired to be like them, the longing soon passed.⁹ "Complacency," Tozer said, "is a deadly foe of all spiritual growth. . . ."¹⁰ For those who were hungering after God, however, Tozer had help, based not upon something new but upon his own discovery of "spiritual realities."¹¹ It is this help that is discussed below.

God Draws, Man Pursues

Tozer wanted God-thirsty souls to know the fact of God's "prevenient grace."¹² Man only pursues God because God first creates the desire; man gets no credit for his coming to God.¹³ Next, man is not a passive receiver; "in practice . . . (that is, where God's previous working meets man's present response) man must pursue God."¹⁴

⁸Of God and Men, op. cit., pp. 11, 12; That Incredible Christian (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Christian Publications, Inc., 1964), pp. 24, 25.

⁹Man: The Dwelling Place of God (Harrisburg, Pa.: Christian Publications, Inc., 1966), p. 39.

¹⁰The Pursuit of God, op. cit., p. 17.

¹¹Ibid., pp. 7, 10. Cf. Man: The Dwelling Place of God, op. cit., pp. 40, 41; The Divine Conquest, op. cit., pp. 12, 13.

¹²The Pursuit of God, op. cit., p. 11.

¹³Ibid., pp. 11, 12.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 12. Cf. Ibid., pp. 65-71.

He also believed that pursuing God begins with regeneration by the Spirit, and that there has been found no end to "the glorious pursuit" ". . . for there is in the awful and mysterious depths of the Triune God neither limit nor end."¹⁵ The Christian is involved in a "holy paradox."¹⁶ He has found God, but still pursues Him.¹⁷ In fact, Tozer said, the one who is seeking the most earnestly to have more of God is the one who already has the most.¹⁸ He thought of the longing for God as a wound from which the Christian should never recover.¹⁹

I believe that God wants us to long for Him with the longing that will become lovesickness, that will become a wound to our spirits, to keep us always moving toward Him, always finding and always seeking, always having and always desiring. So the earth becomes less and less valuable and heaven gets closer as we move into God and up into Christ.²⁰

The Pursuit of God, according to Tozer, begins with God's prevenient drawing upon the regenerated man and is perpetuated by the continual seeking after Him of the one who has already found Him.²¹ During the "holy pursuit" for a deeper acquaintance with God, however, the seeking man must pass through certain experiences, or take certain steps, one at a time, nor must he by-pass any or progress will halt.²² The next sections of this study discussed these steps as Tozer saw them.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 14.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 15.

¹⁷Ibid. Cf. Man: The Dwelling Place of God, op. cit., p. 106.

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 105.

²⁰Ibid., p. 107.

²¹"We have within us the ability to know Him if we will but respond to His overtures. (And this we call pursuing God!)" The Pursuit of God, op. cit., p. 71.

²²Ibid., p. 24.

Desire for God and Holiness

The initial step was that the believer's desire for God and holiness, which began in regeneration, must become strong desire.

"Strive to get beyond mere pensive longing," Tozer said.²³ He did not say, however, that yearnings for God and holiness were actually a common occurrence, and he said, "This contentment with inadequate and imperfect progress in the life of holiness is, I repeat, a scandal in the Church of the First-born. The whole weight of Scripture is against such a thing. The Holy Spirit constantly seeks to arouse the complacent."²⁴ That was how he felt, and he could not see how indifference for things spiritual could be justified.²⁵ Nevertheless, he frequently talked about the lack of desire, or faulty desire, on the part of Christians generally, as was shown below.

Tozer believed that the supreme desire of the Christian was for holiness, and knew some had experienced both the desire and the fulfillment.²⁶ He said, "one of the heaviest problems in the Christian life is that of sanctification: how to become as pure as we know we ought to be and must be if we are to enjoy intimate communion with a holy God."²⁷

²³Man: The Dwelling Place of God, op. cit., p. 40; The Pursuit of God, op. cit., p. 17.

²⁴Man: The Dwelling Place of God, op. cit., p. 39.

²⁵Ibid., p. 40.

²⁶That Incredible Christian, op. cit., p. 34, and The Tozer Pulpit, comp. Gerald B. Smith (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Christian Publications, Inc., 1968), II, p. 20.

²⁷That Incredible Christian, op. cit., pp. 33, 34.

However, the fact is, he said, "The flaming desire to be rid of every unholy thing and to put on the likeness of Christ at any cost is not often found among us."²⁸

He saw faulty desire in the many who wished to be holy, but did not want to be. There is a difference, he said, between wishing and wanting.²⁹ "Every man is as close to God as he wants to be; he is as holy and as full of the Spirit as he wills to be;" but, Tozer said, many who are wishing ". . . are not willing to meet God's conditions to obtain."³⁰ There must be a wholehearted determination to possess what God offers through the atonement, if it is to be obtained.³¹

Tozer also saw faulty desire in the desire for happiness instead of holiness. Holiness is the emphasis in the New Testament, Tozer claimed, not happiness.³² A selfish craving for happiness is sinful, it

²⁸The Root of the Righteous, op. cit., p. 136. The date Tozer wrote the above criticism was not found. Whatever interpretation might be made out of the following, it was of interest that in 1948 he noted, ". . . within the fold of conservative Christianity there are to be found increasing numbers of persons whose religious lives are marked by a growing hunger after God Himself," The Pursuit of God, op. cit., p. 7; then in 1955 he wrote, ". . . the whole concept of saintliness is absent. The yearning to be holy can scarcely be found among the busy religionists of the day," "Are We Having a Revival of True Religion?," The Alliance Weekly, Vol. 90 (May 25, 1955), p. 2.

²⁹That Incredible Christian, op. cit., p. 64.

³⁰Ibid. Cf. Born After Midnight, op. cit., p. 8.

³¹That Incredible Christian, op. cit., pp. 62-64. Cf. Man: The Dwelling Place of God, op. cit., p. 40.

³²Of God and Men, op. cit., p. 46.

springs from the carnal nature, and the teaching that man has an inalienable right to be happy is against God and Christ.³³

One reason he saw for the lack of desire for God was false teaching. When a person is saved, God does put within him a yearning for Himself.³⁴ God wants him to live his life in His conscious Presence; indeed, ". . . the Presence of God is the central fact of Christianity."³⁵ The Christianity now in vogue (1948), however, knows only the theory of the Presence, teaches only the positional Presence for God's children, and therefore bothers little about personal experience, resting instead in "judicial possessions."³⁶ There is also the fallacy that if Christ has been found, he no longer needs to be sought.³⁷

Another reason for lack of desire was compromise. Some have compromised ". . . with their heart's holier longings and have settled down to a lukewarm, mediocre kind of Christianity utterly unworthy of themselves and of the Lord they claim to serve."³⁸ Concerning such, Tozer said that "The world is too much with them and the claims of their earthly lives are too insistent" ³⁹

³³Ibid., pp. 43-45. Cf. The Divine Conquest, op. cit., p. 100.

³⁴The Pursuit of God, op. cit., p. 35.

³⁵Ibid., p. 37.

³⁶Ibid. Tozer's italics.

³⁷Ibid., p. 16.

³⁸That Incredible Christian, op. cit., p. 64.

³⁹Man: The Dwelling Place of God, op. cit., p. 39.

Again, a reason for lack of desire was false thinking. In a published excerpt from one of his sermons, Tozer said that when men began to have faith not just in any god but ". . . in the sovereign God who made heaven and earth, who judges among the gods, and whose throne is justice and judgment, and who will require men's deeds . . .,"⁴⁰ then "We will repent, and we will reform and turn to God, and we will cease to do evil and begin to do good, and turn from the world. We will seek to crucify our flesh and put on the new man which is renewed in holiness."⁴¹ Wrong concepts about God have practical effects, according to Tozer.⁴²

A fourth reason for the lack of desire was the failure to learn the lessons God, as the Christian's Teacher, tried to teach.⁴³ Christians have the Holy Spirit for their Teacher and should naturally move ". . . upward by stages toward spiritual perfection."⁴⁴ Yet it is possible to ". . . meet saintly Christians without becoming stimulated to seek to live holier lives."⁴⁵

⁴⁰The Tozer Pulpit, comp. Gerald B. Smith (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Christian Publications, Inc., 1967), I, pp. 118, 119.

⁴¹Ibid., p. 119. From the context it was impossible to determine whether he meant sinners or Christians by the phrase "renewed in holiness." This reference was included, however, in view of his teaching that the church has suffered much from its unworthy concept of God. The Knowledge of the Holy (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1961), pp. 6-12, 121-124.

⁴²Ibid., p. 10.

⁴³"On Going Through School Without Learning Anything," The Alliance Witness, Vol. 95 (June 29, 1960), p. 2.

⁴⁴Ibid.

⁴⁵Ibid.

Finally, Tozer asked the question, "Why do you suppose so few are interested in the scriptural admonition: 'Let us go on unto perfection'?"⁴⁶ He found the answer rooted in a low concept of what the first work of grace was supposed to do. He was not opposed to two works, and he believed in a person being anointed with the Holy Spirit after regeneration, but he said a second, third, fourth, or fifth experience was having to be invented to give people what they used to get when they first met God.⁴⁷ The new birth should not be preached down to make way for the Spirit's anointing; he continued, "The old Methodist believers were better Christians when they were just newly converted than many of the so-called deeper life people that I run into now, because a miracle had taken place."⁴⁸

Tozer thanked God for those who were sick of sin and were longing to be holy, and prayed that their numbers would increase.⁴⁹ But he also reminded people about the judgment of Christ for Christians,⁵⁰ at which they would have to show Him they had been serious and had not been "out to be entertained" but had been "out to be holy!"⁵¹ He believed, too, that when a person is saved, God puts within him a

⁴⁶The Tozer Pulpit, I, op. cit., p. 138.

⁴⁷Ibid., pp. 139, 140.

⁴⁸Ibid., p. 140.

⁴⁹The Tozer Pulpit, II, op. cit., p. 22.

⁵⁰Ibid., pp. 141, 142.

⁵¹Ibid., p. 142.

yearning for the Presence of God Himself.⁵² He confessed, however,

Almost every day of my life I am praying that 'a jubilant pining and longing for God' might come back on the evangelical churches. We don't need to have our doctrine straightened out; we're as orthodox as the Pharisees of old. But this longing for God that brings spiritual torrents and whirlwinds of seeking and self-denial--this is almost gone from our midst.⁵³

The Christian, then, in Tozer's view, had a God-given desire for holiness and God, but he himself had seen little of this desire in real life. For those who had strong desire, however, he outlined another step in their pursuit of God.

Depravity

The Christian who had taken the first step in the pursuit of God by determining with strong desire to follow Him, has, Tozer maintained, an enemy with which to reckon, the enemy of an indwelling evil nature. The earnest Christian seeking for the deep things of God must recognize and acknowledge this evil nature in order to make progress.

He said the Old Testament tabernacle arrangement of the outer court, the holy place, and the Holy of Holies illustrates man's journey from sin into the Presence of God.⁵⁴ God has made provision through the removal of the veil by Jesus' death for the Christian to enter the Holy of Holies, where dwells the very Presence of God.⁵⁵ Why, he asked, do

⁵²The Pursuit of God, op. cit., p. 35.

⁵³Man: The Dwelling Place of God, op. cit., p. 107.

⁵⁴The Pursuit of God, op. cit., pp. 35-44.

⁵⁵Ibid., pp. 43, 36.

those who know this, and hear the call to enter, fail to enter? The usual answer given is coldness of heart.⁵⁶ Yet, "there is something more serious than coldness of heart, something that may be back of that coldness and be the cause of its existence."⁵⁷ It is a veil in the heart, ". . . the veil of our fleshly fallen nature living on, unjudged within us, uncrucified and unrepudiated."⁵⁸ This veil of the "self-life" has never been really acknowledged, and it is ". . . an enemy to our lives and an effective block to our spiritual progress."⁵⁹ It may be seen by the one who looks into his own heart. It is not beautiful, nor something men usually like to talk about, but those who determine to follow God will look straight at the facts no matter how unpleasant.⁶⁰

Tozer called the veil of the self-life by many different names, "depravity,"⁶¹ "the fleshly fallen nature,"⁶² "the galling yoke of sin,"⁶³ "old life,"⁶⁴ "the life of Adam,"⁶⁵ and "a tough fibrous root of fallen life."⁶⁶ He believed that there was a difference between sins that were committed and sin as an inherited evil in the heart, as this passage from The Knowledge of the Holy showed:

⁵⁶Ibid., pp. 43, 44. ⁵⁷Ibid., p. 44. ⁵⁸Ibid. ⁵⁹Ibid.

⁶⁰The Pursuit of God, op. cit., pp. 44, 45.

⁶¹Ibid., p. 45. ⁶²Ibid., p. 44.

⁶³The Root of the Righteous, op. cit., p. 83.

⁶⁴The Divine Conquest, op. cit., p. 62.

⁶⁵Man: The Dwelling Place of God, op. cit., p. 66.

⁶⁶The Pursuit of God, op. cit., p. 22.

. . . 'The essence of sin is to will one thing,' for to set our will against the will of God is to dethrone God and make ourselves supreme in the little kingdom of Mansoul. This is sin at its evil root. Sins may multiply like the sands by the seashore, but they are yet one. Sins are because sin is. This is the rationale behind the much maligned doctrine of natural depravity which holds that the impenitent man can do nothing but sin and that his good deeds are really not good at all.⁶⁷

Furthermore, he found scriptural support for his belief that the old principle of sin remained in a man after he became a Christian. One of his main Scripture proofs was Romans 6-8. He said, "The struggle of the Christian man to be good while the bent toward self-assertion still lives within him as a kind of unconscious moral reflex is vividly described by the apostle Paul in the seventh chapter of his Roman Epistle"⁶⁸

Aside from the Scriptures, he found the fleshly nature working in contemporary Christianity, an additional proof of the existence of a deeper problem in man beyond that solved by justification and regeneration. In The Pursuit of God, he said that the nature of the fallen life within man's heart is to desire the possession of things. Things, gifts of God, have displaced God,⁶⁹ and the very characteristic of the self-life ". . . is its possessiveness."⁷⁰ The words "my" and "mine"

⁶⁷The Knowledge of the Holy, op. cit., p. 37. Cf. p. 36. Cf. "The Blessedness of the Fixed Heart," The Alliance Weekly, Vol. 91 (June 6, 1956), p. 2.

⁶⁸The Knowledge of the Holy, op. cit., p. 37. Cf. Paths to Power (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Christian Publications, Inc., n.d.), p. 30; That Incredible Christian, op. cit., pp. 40, 53; Man: The Dwelling Place of God, op. cit., pp. 66, 128.

⁶⁹The Pursuit of God, op. cit., p. 22.

⁷⁰Ibid., p. 23.

are significant because of their universal and frequent use: "They express the real nature of the old Adamic man better than a thousand volumes of theology could do. They are verbal symptoms of our deep disease."⁷¹ Possessiveness is very natural, and is therefore not often recognized for its evilness; but it is damaging to the life.⁷² "The Christian," he said, "who is alive enough to know himself even slightly will recognize the symptoms of this possession malady, and will grieve to find them in his own heart."⁷³

Other evidences of the remaining sin in the regenerate were as follows: the church that must live on excitement, ("The desire for surface stimulation is a sure mark of the fallen nature . . .");⁷⁴ "the man who is elated by success and cast down by failure . . .";⁷⁵ "carnal courage," ("From Adam we inherit the instinct to meet our enemies head on, to try to win by direct assault . . .");⁷⁶ intemperance;⁷⁷ turning "good into evil";⁷⁸ and the "self-sins": "self-righteousness, self-pity, self-confidence, self-sufficiency, self-admiration,

⁷¹Ibid., p. 22. ⁷²Ibid., p. 28. ⁷³Ibid., p. 29.

⁷⁴"We Must Stay by the Majors," The Alliance Weekly, Vol. 85 (June 10, 1950), p. 354.

⁷⁵Born After Midnight, op. cit., p. 59.

⁷⁶"Humility Wins Where Force Cannot," The Alliance Weekly, Vol. 87 (February 6, 1952), p. 82.

⁷⁷"Temperance, the Rare Virtue," The Alliance Witness, Vol. 93 (September 10, 1958), p. 2.

⁷⁸"Evangelical Snobbery," The Alliance Witness, Vol. 97 (November 28, 1962), p. 2.

self-love"79 In commenting on the self-sins, Tozer said that

The grosser manifestations of these sins, egotism, exhibitionism, self-promotion, are strangely tolerated in Christian leaders even in circles of impeccable orthodoxy. They are so much in evidence as actually, for many people, to become identified with the gospel. I trust it is not a cynical observation to say that they appear these days to be a requisite for popularity in some sections of the Church visible. Promoting self under the guise of promoting Christ is currently so common as to excite little notice.⁸⁰

One of the terms Tozer used to describe the Christian with a sin nature was "carnal." What he meant by carnal was seen in the following paragraphs:

Now, a carnal Christian is one who is truly and indeed a Christian, and has the seed of God in him without doubt, and the root of the matter in his soul, without question.

A child of the Father, he also has in him a great big hunk of lust and jealousy and high temper and a lot of other things--those evil things called carnal--out of the Latin meaning 'flesh.'⁸¹

The carnal nature, according to Tozer, manifested itself in various ways in the Christian life. For instance, the carnal Christian is more concerned with things surrounding, or pertaining to God, than with God Himself. Loyalty to a religious group, to a denomination, to the extent where it is first before God is wrong. Even theology may be more before the attention of the soul than God.⁸² Tozer made the conclusion, "We may judge our spiritual growth pretty accurately by observing the total emphasis of our heart. Where is the primary

⁷⁹The Pursuit of God, op. cit., p. 45.

⁸⁰Ibid.

⁸¹The Tozer Fulpit, I, op. cit., p. 133.

⁸²Of God and Men, op. cit., pp. 109, 110.

interest? Is it Beth-el or El-beth-el? Is it my church or my Lord? Is it my ministry or my God? My creed or my Christ?"⁸³ Beth-el, he pointed out, means "'the house of God'" and El-beth-el means "'the God of the house of God.'"⁸⁴ Jacob's ladder experience brought him to the house of God, but a significant change took place when his life shifted from God's house to God Himself.⁸⁵ Christians today, Tozer commented, are carnal or spiritual depending on their interest in the house or in ". . . the God of the house."⁸⁶

In churches, he said, carnality is seen in attitudes and tastes: "Our young people often are not reverent in our Christian services. We have so degraded our religious tastes that our Christian service is largely exhibitionism."⁸⁷ There are also contentious people in the church who ". . . think well of a brother until he gets elected to the board and then they're suspicious of him. Then when they get elected to the board, they're still suspicious of everyone but themselves."⁸⁸ Then too, carnality in the church is seen by the desire of a gifted few to ". . . bring the less gifted majority to heel and get them where they will not stand in the way of their soaring ambitions."⁸⁹

⁸³Ibid., p. 111. ⁸⁴Ibid., p. 109.

⁸⁵Ibid. ⁸⁶Ibid., p. 111.

⁸⁷The Tozer Pulpit, II, op. cit., p. 60.

⁸⁸The Tozer Pulpit, I, op. cit., p. 134.

⁸⁹"Organization: Necessary and Dangerous," The Alliance Witness, Vol. 95 (April 20, 1960), p. 4. Tozer, in the same article, tabbed the carnal desire to rule as one of the reasons for complexity in church organization.

Finally, carnality is the reason, Tozer noted, that ". . . many Christians instinctively cling to their treasures, defend their possessions and fight for their reputation."⁹⁰ The Christian, being "A child of two worlds," got his early training and thinking from living among fallen men.⁹¹ Upon being born again, he is in a new spiritual world where he is supposed to live by new laws and new principles, but because of the influence of the old life ". . . he may, unless he is very wise and prayerful, find himself trying to live a heavenly life after an earthly pattern. This is what Paul called 'carnal' living. The issues of the new Christian life are influenced by the automatic responses of the old life and confusion results."⁹² The carnal Christian is defensive, Tozer wrote, imagining that someone is always trying to "'put something over'" on him, ". . . burning up energies in a vain endeavor to protect themselves," with the result of ". . . worry, resentfulness and a kind of low-pressure hostility toward everyone they may have reason to believe is after something they possess."⁹³

The carnal Christian, according to Tozer, is a born-again man, but ". . . has so much of the old carnal nature in him that he's not living a very good life."⁹⁴ He needs to be delivered from being

⁹⁰Born After Midnight, op. cit., p. 98.

⁹¹Ibid., p. 97.

⁹²Ibid., pp. 97, 98.

⁹³Ibid., p. 98.

⁹⁴The Tozer Pulpit, I, op. cit., p. 134.

rebellious and contentious and from "fleshly lusts."⁹⁵ Tozer did not, however, identify the carnal nature with the "flesh" of the human body. He described the difference in the following way:

God is not ever mad at your body, keep that in mind. The Lord isn't angry with your body, because your body is just a poor horse you ride until it crumbles under you, and you go off to heaven.

There is nothing in your body that can do wrong. Your body is a neutral thing, and it is only your spirit that rules your body, and can lead it wrong. Just like your automobile--there's nothing in your automobile that can do wrong, but if you get behind the wheel, because you have will and spirit and intellect you can take your car and do wrong with it.⁹⁶

Summary

Tozer believed that the regenerated man desired to know God in a more intimate and satisfying way. He believed, however, that because of various conditions, the hunger for God among Christians was almost gone. He instructed those who were hungering for God that it was God who had produced their desire for Himself, but they needed to pursue after Him. Tozer saw the pursuit of God not only as a desire for God, but as exploration of the riches of the Triune God, an exploration with no known end. During the pursuit to know God in a deeper way, Tozer said, the Christian had to pass through certain necessary experiences.

First, his desire for God and holiness, which began in regeneration, had to become strong desire. Tozer recognized that there was a great lack of desire, and also faulty desire among Christians.

⁹⁵Ibid.

⁹⁶Ibid., p. 133.

The Christian, however, whose desire for God and holiness was strong, had to take another step in his pursuit of God. He had to recognize and acknowledge the presence of his sinful nature. Tozer believed that it was the sinful nature which hindered the Christian from experiencing and enjoying the full Presence of God in his life. He described this sinful nature by various terms, believing that it was inherited from Adam and that it was completely evil.

Tozer believed in the difference between sins and sin in the heart. His belief about the existence of the evil nature in the Christian he based upon Scripture and upon evidences in contemporary Christianity. Some of its manifestations which he saw were possessiveness, the desire for things instead of God; intemperance, self-pity, self-love, self-confidence; the church that had to live on excitement; and egotism, self-promotion and exhibitionism in Christian leaders. The carnal Christian, he believed, was a true Christian, but had jealousy and temper, and was more concerned with the things pertaining to God than with God Himself. While Tozer believed that the carnal nature was manifested in rebellion and "fleshly lusts," he did not identify it with the physical body.

The Christian, therefore, who is following after God and who sees within himself the sinful, carnal nature, the self-life, must, according to Tozer, take another step before he can experientially enter into the very Presence of God: he must surrender and die.⁹⁷

⁹⁷Tozer sometimes described these two experiences of surrender and death together, but most of the time separately. Here they were called one step, but were discussed under separate headings.

Surrender

"Surrender" was the term Tozer seemed to use most when speaking about the condition of yielding all to God, which had to be met before the soul could enter into intimate communion with God, (he also used "consecration" and "commitment"). Surrender was the way to victorious living, the requirement for God's glory and the soul's everlasting welfare.⁹⁸ Tozer discussed this at considerable length, as the following sections show.

The need for the surrender of things. Surrender, in one sense, to Tozer, meant giving up "things." Christ taught separation from the world and total consecration to God as the exclusive way to gain the eternal riches found only in God.⁹⁹ Tozer believed that in the beginning God made a world of helpful and good things for man's well-being, but that none of these were to come into his inner shrine, where God alone was worthy to dwell. Man's troubles began when God had to leave His dwelling place and "things," which were meant to be external and subservient to man, were allowed to enter the sanctuary; today, instead of God being on the throne of man's heart, things fight a civil war for first place.¹⁰⁰ Therefore, the man who longs to know God in a deeper way must be freed from ". . . the tyranny of things."¹⁰¹ This

⁹⁸Born After Midnight, op. cit., pp. 98, 99; Of God and Men, op. cit., p. 39, 40.

⁹⁹"Shadow vs. Reality," The Alliance Weekly, Vol. 87 (February 20, 1952), p. 114.

¹⁰⁰The Pursuit of God, op. cit., pp. 21, 22.

¹⁰¹Ibid., p. 23. Tozer's italics. Cf. Five Vows for Spiritual

freedom will come, said Tozer, through surrender, not by fighting; and surrender cannot be successfully by-passed in the pursuit of God.¹⁰² Fear for the safety of things, especially relatives and friends; hinders the surrender of them to the Lord, "but," he said, "we need have no such fears. Our Lord came not to destroy but to save. Everything is safe which we commit to Him, and nothing is really safe which is not so committed."¹⁰³ The carnal Christian will not be victorious until he ceases to defend his possessions and position and surrenders them to God.¹⁰⁴ The surrendering of "gifts and talents" is also necessary, Tozer said, because they have been loaned by God, and they should never be thought of in any way as being self-owned.¹⁰⁵

The experience of the surrender of things. Tozer's advice, therefore, to the Christian who was serious enough about finding God to do something about it was two-fold. First, he must refuse to defend himself and ". . . trample under foot every slippery trick of his deceitful heart and insist upon frank and open relations with the Lord."¹⁰⁶

Power (Harrisburg, Pa.: Christian Publications, Inc., n.d.), pp. 8, 9.

¹⁰²Ibid., pp. 23, 24. "As is frequently true, this New Testament principle of spiritual life finds its best illustration in the Old Testament. In the story of Abraham and Isaac we have a dramatic picture of the surrendered life" Ibid., p. 24.

¹⁰³Ibid., p. 28. Cf. Born After Midnight, op. cit., pp. 98, 99.

¹⁰⁴Ibid.

¹⁰⁵The Pursuit of God, op. cit., p. 28.

¹⁰⁶Ibid., p. 29.

Second, he must ". . . insist that God accept his all, that He take things out of his heart and Himself reign there in power."¹⁰⁷ He may even need to name people and things individually. By being ". . . drastic enough he can shorten the time of his travail from years to minutes and enter the good land long before his slower brethren who coddle their feelings and insist upon caution in their dealings with God."¹⁰⁸ Tozer then emphasized, if anyone wants the blessings of Abraham, he has actually to go through the same "harsh and bitter experiences" in his heart; "The Blessedness of Possessing Nothing" cannot be learned as other facts might be, it has to be experienced.¹⁰⁹ To know God in "growing intimacy," he continued, man must proceed by the way of renunciation, and those pursuing God will eventually come to the testing time, perhaps as Abraham, without the knowledge that this is the time when only one of two choices may be made, with the future being conditioned on the choice made.¹¹⁰

The need for the surrender of all. Surrender also meant for Tozer "Restoring the Creator-creature Relation."¹¹¹ It was a broader concept than "things," for it included not only "possessions," "family," and "friendships" but also "comforts," "reputation," "ambitions," "likes and dislikes," "health," and "life itself."¹¹² Salvation, he said, is

¹⁰⁷Ibid. Tozer's italics.

¹⁰⁸Ibid.

¹⁰⁹Ibid., p. 30.

¹¹⁰Ibid., pp. 30, 31.

¹¹¹Ibid., pp. 99-108.

¹¹²Ibid., p. 108.

essentially a restoring of man and God to a right relation, ". . . a bringing back to normal of the Creator-creature relation."¹¹³ The fact is, God is the "fixed center" of all relationship; He does not change; He is before all; He brought all things into existence and they exist for Him.¹¹⁴ "Much of our difficulty as seeking Christians," he said,

stems from our unwillingness to take God as He is and adjust our lives accordingly. We insist upon trying to modify Him and to bring Him nearer to our own image. The flesh whimpers against the rigor of God's inexorable sentence and begs like Agag for a little mercy, a little indulgence of its carnal ways. It is no use. We can get a right start only by accepting God as He is and learning to love Him for what He is.¹¹⁵

The seeking soul, therefore, must start with God. He must realize that because everything comes from and belongs to God, because God is "Who and What He is" and man is who and what he is, the only reasonable relationship between them is God's "full lordship" and man's "complete submission."¹¹⁶

The experience of the surrender of all. This involves, as Tozer described it, the exercise of man's will in making ". . . the once-for-all decision to exalt Him over all."¹¹⁷ He said,

The pursuit of God will embrace the labor of bringing our total personality into conformity to His. And this not judicially, but actually. I do not here refer to the act of justification by faith in Christ. I speak of a voluntary exalting of God to His proper station over us and a willing surrender of our whole being to the place of worshipful submission which the Creator-creature circumstance makes proper.¹¹⁸

¹¹³Ibid., pp. 99, 100. ¹¹⁴Ibid., p. 100, 101.

¹¹⁵Ibid., p. 101. ¹¹⁶Ibid., pp. 101, 102.

¹¹⁷Ibid., pp. 107, 103-107. ¹¹⁸Ibid., p. 102.

Tozer assured those who feared the loss of any human dignity by the willful surrender of all to God that they would lose nothing, but would find in giving back the throne to God and in exalting Him their ". . . own highest honor upheld."¹¹⁹ Nor should the man who surrenders to God feel that his will is destroyed, he said. It may seem in the crisis of surrender that it is broken, but God does not destroy anything of the soul's normal workings; He sanctifies the will and unites it with His will.¹²⁰ The impression of surrender given by the words of one song, that the only Christian qualified for service is a useless one, is an idea accepted by multitudes, resulting in indecision instead of determination, uncertainty instead of assurance, and fear instead of courage.¹²¹ He also taught that real surrender of the will was surrender to active obedience. "A mere passive surrender may be no surrender at all."¹²²

The results of the surrender of things. Tozer described the result of surrendering "things" as "The Blessedness of Possessing

¹¹⁹Ibid., p. 104.

¹²⁰"Total Commitment to Christ: What Is It?," The Alliance Witness, Vol. 98 (September 18, 1963), pp. 4, 7; "The Set of the Sail," The Alliance Weekly, Vol. 88 (October 7, 1953), p. 2; That Incredible Christian, op. cit., pp. 29-31; The Divine Conquest, op. cit., pp. 103-106.

¹²¹"The Set of the Sail," loc. cit. The words of the song as quoted in the article were "'Oh to be nothing, nothing! Only to lie at His feet, A broken and emptied vessel, For the Master's use made meet.'"

¹²²"Obedience: A Neglected Doctrine," The Alliance Weekly, Vol. 88 (November 18, 1953), p. 2.

Nothing."¹²³ Surrendered persons, he said, are blessed because they are free from the "sense of possessing;" but they still "possess all things."¹²⁴ He described Abraham as the type of the surrendered man, as having gained the position once held by man before the fall: he still owned everything he had had before, and they were his to enjoy, but they were external; his real riches were internal and eternal.¹²⁵

The results of the surrender of all. The man who had willingly given his entire being to God in a once-for-all surrender, who had determined that God would be exalted over everything, would be increasingly out of step with the world's ways. Tozer claimed, he will "acquire a new viewpoint," find a "new and different psychology" formed within, and be surprised by the "upsurgings" and "outgoings" of "a new power"¹²⁶ The person who has said to God, "'Be thou exalted'," has found ". . . a little key to unlock the door to great treasures of grace."¹²⁷ His life becomes simple instead of complicated, for

By the exercise of his will he has set his course, and on that course he will stay as if guided by an automatic pilot. If blown off course for a moment by some adverse wind he will surely return again as by a secret bent of the soul. The hidden motions of the Spirit are working in his favor, and 'the stars in their courses' fight for him. He has met his life problem at its center, and everything else must follow along.¹²⁸

¹²³The Pursuit of God, op. cit., p. 21.

¹²⁴Ibid., p. 23. Cf. pp. 27, 28.

¹²⁵Ibid. ¹²⁶Ibid., p. 102.

¹²⁷Ibid., p. 103.

¹²⁸Ibid., pp. 103, 104.

Surrender to Christ results in release from "a cruel slave driver" to having "a kind and gentle Master whose yoke is easy and whose burden is light."¹²⁹

Summary of Surrender

The main points concerning surrender, as taught by Tozer, were summarized in the following statements: (1) surrender was the renunciation of "things" and was submission to God; (2) it was a once-done act of the human will; (3) it meant active obedience to God; (4) it was the determination to exalt God over all; (5) it resulted in freedom from slavery to things; (6) it resulted in God again reigning in kindness within the human heart; (7) it resulted in a new power for life and a new quality of life.¹³⁰

Death

Besides the act and experience of surrender, described in the previous section, the Christian who pursues God in order to know His Presence more intimately must die, and that by crucifixion; so Tozer wrote and preached.¹³¹ The crucifixion of the Christian appeared to be

¹²⁹Ibid., p. 104.

¹³⁰Tozer's sermon to the National Association of Evangelicals on "Total Commitment to Christ: What Is It?" summarized well his teaching on the subject of surrender. It began with the consideration of Christ, His "centrality, basicality, pre-eminence," and then described the attachment of the believer to Christ as "intellectual and volitional and exclusive and inclusive and irrevocable." "Total Commitment to Christ: What Is It?," op. cit., pp. 3, 4, 7, 8. Tozer's italics.

¹³¹Ibid. Cf. The Pursuit of God, op. cit., pp. 46, 47.

separate from surrender in the teaching of Tozer. Whether they were separate only in his thought and teaching, but were actually considered by him to be two phases of one experience, he never clearly stated. In one place he did link surrender and dying, for he said that in order to enter "A state of pure passivity in which the believer has surrendered all desire and entered into spiritual union with God . . ." there must be a lot of previous activity; "there must be a lot of rude dying before we can know the calm peace of the resurrection."¹³² In the booklet Five Vows for Spiritual Power, he talked about commitment in terms of vows which ". . . introduce the cross into your life."¹³³ Since he typically separated surrender and crucifixion, however, the study followed his practice. His doctrine of the Christian's crucifixion was divided into four sections: (1) the distinctions of the cross; (2) the meaning of the cross; (3) the necessity of the cross; (4) the experience of the cross.

The distinctions of the cross. One of Tozer's favorite expressions when speaking of a person's relationship to Christ was "the cross." Although, he said, all crosses are the same as to function, putting men to death, no two crosses are the same. No man can die on another's cross, but only on his own.¹³⁴ He distinguished between three crosses, the cross of Christ, the cross of the Christian's death to

¹³²"Passivity and Power," The Alliance Weekly, Vol. 85 (July 8, 1950), p. 430.

¹³³Five Vows for Spiritual Power, op. cit., p. 15.

¹³⁴Of God and Men, op. cit., pp. 41, 42.

self, and the cross of the Christian's daily walk.¹³⁵ The cross which the Christian is called to experience is not Christ's, he pointed out. That is, the dying which Christ experienced in bearing the sins of the world was unique. His agonies were never before experienced, nor have they been since, and anyone claiming an experience even remotely like His would be committing a sacrilege.¹³⁶ Yet, Tozer said, there is ". . . a real sense in which the cross of Christ embraces all crosses and the death of Christ encompasses all deaths."¹³⁷ The Christian is judicially identified in Christ's crucifixion, upon which all future experience of crucifixion for the believer is based. In the everyday working out of this identification, however, the believer's own cross enters the scene:¹³⁸

In every Christian's heart there is a cross and a throne, and the Christian is on the throne till he puts himself on the cross; if he refuses the cross he remains on the throne. Perhaps this is at the bottom of the backsliding and worldliness among gospel believers today. We want to be saved but we insist that Christ do all the dying.¹³⁹

The believer, Tozer taught, experiences the cross in two ways, by dying upon it once-for-all (which was discussed in the next two sections) and by daily carrying it.¹⁴⁰ After having counted himself

¹³⁵Ibid., p. 42; That Incredible Christian, op. cit., 111, 114, 115.

¹³⁶Of God and Men, op. cit., p. 41. ¹³⁷Ibid., p. 42.

¹³⁸Ibid. Cf. "The Law of the Leader," The Alliance Weekly, Vol. 91 (February 15, 1956), p. 2.

¹³⁹The Root of the Righteous, op. cit., p. 66. My italics.

¹⁴⁰Of God and Men, op. cit., pp. 42, 43; That Incredible Christian, op. cit., pp. 113-115. Cf. "The True Motive for Christian Conduct," The

dead with Christ, the Christian must ". . . accept willingly whatever of self-denial, repentance, humility and humble sacrifice that may be found in the path of obedient daily living. That is his cross, and it is the only one the Lord has invited him to bear."¹⁴¹ Carrying the cross is a voluntary act of the Christian; the cross is the suffering which comes to the Christian as a result of his choice to follow Christ in perfect obedience.¹⁴² In Tozer's doctrine, Christ's cross was redemptive, and the daily cross of the Christian was suffering through obedience. There was, however, the cross of the Christian's death to self which was necessary for victorious living. Before discussing that cross, the study described the meaning of the cross itself, which had bearing upon the Christian's own cross.

The meaning of the cross. The chief characteristic of the cross as it appeared in Tozer's works was its relentless destructive power, out of which came resurrection.¹⁴³ The cross itself, as it was in Roman times, he noted, ". . . knew no compromise; it never made concessions. It won all its arguments by killing its opponent and silencing him for good."¹⁴⁴ The cross slew Christ as it did any man, and after He rose

Alliance Witness, Vol. 94 (June 17, 1959), p. 2.

¹⁴¹Of God and Men, op. cit., p. 43.

¹⁴²That Incredible Christian, loc. cit. He distinguished also between suffering from cross carrying and suffering from God's chastisement for disobedience. The former suffering was chosen, but the latter was imposed.

¹⁴³The Root of the Righteous, op. cit., p. 62.

¹⁴⁴Ibid., p. 61.

from the dead, His apostles preached "His message," the message of the cross.¹⁴⁵ Tozer criticized the changing of the meaning of the cross.

It lost its power, he said,

. . . when it was changed from a thing of death to a thing of beauty. When men made of it a symbol, hung it around their necks as an ornament or made its outline before their faces as a magic sign to ward off evil, then it became at best a weak emblem, at worst a positive fetish. As such it is revered today by millions who know absolutely nothing about its power.¹⁴⁶

Likewise, evangelicalism, he charged, has changed the meaning of the cross in another way. He spoke of "The Old Cross and the New."¹⁴⁷ The old cross ended life, the life of the follower of Christ as well as Christ's life. It destroyed the pattern of Adam and allowed God to raise the believer to a new life.¹⁴⁸ Tozer made a series of parallels between this old cross and the new cross of modern evangelicalism:

"The old cross slew men; the new cross entertains them. The old cross condemned; the new cross amuses. The old cross destroyed confidence in the flesh; the new cross encourages it. The old cross brought tears and blood; the new cross brings laughter."¹⁴⁹ The true cross brought shame, rejection, and loss to Christ, and these, Tozer claimed, belong also to His followers: "The cross that saves them also slays them."¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁵Ibid. ¹⁴⁶Ibid., p. 62.

¹⁴⁷Man: The Dwelling Place of God, op. cit., p. 42. Cf. "Salvation Walks the Earth," The Alliance Weekly, Vol. 86 (May 23, 1951), p. 306.

¹⁴⁸The Root of the Righteous, op. cit., pp. 62, 63. Cf. Man: The Dwelling Place of God, op. cit., p. 45 where Tozer said, "The cross that ended the earthly life of Jesus now puts an end to the sinner"

¹⁴⁹The Divine Conquest, op. cit., pp. 59, 60. ¹⁵⁰Ibid., p. 59.

But, he charged, the leaders of evangelicalism in the main are not crucified. They make friends with the world, though they reject its grosser aspects;¹⁵¹ they ". . . would modify the cross to please the entertainment-mad saintlings who will have their fun even within the very sanctuary" ¹⁵² The evangelism of the new cross does not demand the renunciation of the old life in order for a new life to be received, but it tries to win people ". . . by showing that Christianity makes no unpleasant demands" ¹⁵³ The sinner is not slain, Tozer said, but is offered the opportunity of redirecting his life onto a higher plain, for the sake of Christ. "To the self-assertive it says, 'Come and assert yourself for Christ.' To the egotist it says, 'Come and do your boasting in the Lord.' To the thrill seeker it says, 'Come and enjoy the thrill of Christian fellowship.'" ¹⁵⁴ No matter how sincere, this way is false, and completely misses what the true meaning of the cross is. ¹⁵⁵ To change the meaning of the cross, Tozer pointed out, is to lose the power of the cross. To preach the cross as the way of death unto life is to restore the power. ¹⁵⁶

¹⁵¹ Ibid. ¹⁵² The Root of the Righteous, op. cit., p. 63.

¹⁵³ Man: The Dwelling Place of God, op. cit., p. 43.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid. ¹⁵⁵ Ibid.

¹⁵⁶ The Root of the Righteous, loc. cit.; Man: The Dwelling Place of God, op. cit., p. 45. Tozer said that another wrong conception of the cross, the one of "death-bed scenes and churchyards and funerals," may be partly responsible for ". . . the appearance of the new and jolly cross of today." People want life, but when told that it comes through the cross, they reject the message of the cross because they can only associate the cross with ". . . such typical images as memorial plaques, dim-lit aisles and ivy." The Divine Conquest, op. cit., pp. 61, 62.

The necessity of the cross. Tozer believed in the necessity of a right understanding and in a right preachment of the message of the cross so that the power of the cross could be effective. The cross, he wrote, is absolutely necessary. It answered in part the questions raised earlier, "How holy must a man be in order to have communion with a holy God?" and "How can a man become holy in order to have communion with a holy God?" The believer, Tozer held, was made holy in an initial sense through the new birth, but a dark, evil nature of sin still resided within to spoil the fulfillment of his longing for perfect victory and the intimate presence of God. The only way, he said, for the believer to be fitted for unclouded fellowship with God and continual victory is for him to die the death of the cross. Referring to St. Augustine's prayer, "'Let me die--lest I die--only let me see Thy face,'"¹⁵⁷ Tozer commented that all believers who were hungering for God understood at once this language. "There is no contradiction here," he said, "for there are before us two kinds of dying, a dying to be sought and a dying to be avoided at any cost."¹⁵⁸ St. Augustine ". . . died the kind of death to which Paul testified: 'I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.'"¹⁵⁹ Tozer warned, if the believer does not die, does not have the evil nature crucified, he dooms himself to ". . . shadows and weakness and spiritual

¹⁵⁷The Root of the Righteous, op. cit., p. 64.

¹⁵⁸Ibid., p. 65.

¹⁵⁹Ibid.

sterility."¹⁶⁰ Continuing in detail, he said,

If we will not die then we must die, and that death will mean the forfeiture of many of those everlasting treasures which the saints have cherished. Our uncrucified flesh will rob us of purity of heart, Christlikeness of character, spiritual insight, fruitfulness; and more than all, it will hide from us the vision of God's face, that vision which has been the light of earth and will be the completeness of heaven.¹⁶¹

No other method but the cross will deliver the Christian from the tyranny of the flesh. The Scriptures do not teach bodily abuse as the means for deliverance; the flesh is too tough to be slain by that, or by ". . . starving the affections. It yields to nothing less than the cross."¹⁶² The life motivated by it cannot please God, Tozer affirmed, nor can the carnal mind be converted:¹⁶³

To save us completely Christ must reverse the bent of our nature; He must plant a new principle within us so that our subsequent conduct will spring out of a desire to promote the honor of God and the good of our fellow men. The old self-sins must die, and the only instrument by which they can be slain is the cross.¹⁶⁴

Tozer's quotation of a Greek hymn summed up his belief that the Christian's own death on his own cross was necessary:

'My God, shall sin its power maintain
And in my soul defiant live!
'Tis not enough that Thou forgive,
The cross must rise and self be slain.

¹⁶⁰Ibid., p. 66.

¹⁶¹Ibid.

¹⁶²Ibid. Cf. Man: The Dwelling Place of God, op. cit., p. 72.

¹⁶³Ibid., p. 66.

¹⁶⁴The Knowledge of the Holy, op. cit., p. 38.

O God of love, Thy power disclose:
 'Tis not enough that Christ should rise,
 I, too must seek the brightening skies,
 And rise from death, as Christ arose.¹⁶⁵

The experience of the cross. While Tozer held to the position that the victorious Christian was the crucified Christian, he admitted that writing about it was easier than living it. There is often a breakdown between theory and application of the theory, he said. The destruction of self is not an easy thing. To experience victory, "judicial crucifixion" must become actual and faith must "claim the risen life of Christ" for its very own.¹⁶⁶ The Christian, he stated, must experience something radical within, a crucifixion which psychologically comes near to real crucifixion: "What Christ went through we also must go through. Rejection, surrender, loss, a violent detachment from the world, the pain of social ostracism--all must be felt in our actual experience."¹⁶⁷ Christ never meant for believers to have ". . . a mere theory of self-denial."¹⁶⁸ He meant for His disciples, and they must have understood, that they were to experience loss and pain similar to His.¹⁶⁹ There are some who only want what gain there is from the cross, but they do not want its control; they do not want

¹⁶⁵Ibid.

¹⁶⁶Man: The Dwelling Place of God, op. cit., pp. 72, 73.

¹⁶⁷Ibid., p. 72.

¹⁶⁸Ibid., p. 73.

¹⁶⁹Ibid. Cf. The Pursuit of God, op. cit., p. 46.

Christ as Lord over them.¹⁷⁰ Tozer reminded people that "The life that halts short of the cross is but a fugitive and condemned thing, doomed at last to be lost beyond recovery."¹⁷¹ For those who want victory, there must be a passing out of theory into the actual taking up of the cross and going out to ". . . the dark and bitter hill of self-renunciation."¹⁷² Tozer believed that crucifixion was a work of God and man. Man must surrender his sinful nature up to God for crucifixion. This is admitting that God has made a "just sentence" against it and has a right ". . . to end its unlovely career."¹⁷³ Although the cross is not enjoyable,¹⁷⁴ he explained, God cannot exercise His desires toward us until "carnal ambition" has been dealt with; until ". . . we have trodden upon the lion and adder of the flesh, have trampled the dragon of self-love under our feet and have truly reckoned ourselves to have died unto sin . . ."¹⁷⁵ This reckoning, or faith, Tozer said, must be real. The Christian must distinguish between mere acceptance and the true work of God; he must not rest upon ". . . a neat doctrine of self-crucifixion."¹⁷⁶ God must do the work, and He will work where

¹⁷⁰The Tozer Pulpit, II, op. cit., p. 18.

¹⁷¹The Divine Conquest, op. cit., p. 62.

¹⁷²Born After Midnight, op. cit., p. 10. Cf. "Total Commitment to Christ: What Is It?," op. cit., p. 8.

¹⁷³The Divine Conquest, op. cit., p. 63. Cf. Man: The Dwelling Place of God, op. cit., p. 128.

¹⁷⁴The Divine Conquest, op. cit., p. 125.

¹⁷⁵Born After Midnight, loc. cit.

¹⁷⁶The Pursuit of God, op. cit., p. 47.

true faith is.¹⁷⁷ As for faith, although Tozer insisted that the believer's part was confessing, forsaking, repudiating, and reckoning,¹⁷⁸ he said that faith was gazing upon God, or Christ:

Like the eye which sees everything in front of it and never sees itself, faith is occupied with the Object upon which it rests and pays no attention to itself at all. While we are looking at God we do not see ourselves--blessed riddance. The man who has struggled to purify himself and has had nothing but repeated failures will experience real relief when he stops tinkering with his soul and looks away to the perfect One. While he looks at Christ the very things he has so long been trying to do will be getting done within him. It will be God working in him to will and to do.¹⁷⁹

The Christian who sets his heart to pursue God, Tozer noted, will experience ". . . seekings and findings, self-repudiations, tough disciplines and daily dyings as he is being crucified unto the world and the world unto him" but the Christian life is not unending conflict and struggle.¹⁸⁰ "The heart that learns to die with Christ soon knows the blessed experience of rising with Him"¹⁸¹

Summary of Death

Tozer's teaching about the death of the believer was summarized in the following: (1) the cross was an instrument of death in history, this meaning was carried into Christian belief through the death of Christ on the cross; (2) the cross of Christ was His alone to suffer,

¹⁷⁷Ibid., pp. 46, 47; The Divine Conquest, op. cit., p. 63.

¹⁷⁸The Pursuit of God, op. cit., p. 47.

¹⁷⁹Ibid., p. 91. Cf. The Divine Conquest, loc. cit.

¹⁸⁰Of God and Men, op. cit., pp. 39, 40.

¹⁸¹Ibid., p. 40.

but through the redemption that was accomplished on it, every believer has been identified with that cross judicially; (3) the cross of the Christian was not Christ's cross, but one on which he had to die personally; (4) the cross worked by ending an old order of life so that a new could be established; (5) modern evangelicals introduced a new, deathless, powerless cross into Christianity, which was not the true cross; (6) the Christian's death on the cross was necessary to destroy the evil nature and to let the Christian know God in intimacy; (7) only the cross could destroy the evil nature; (8) without crucifixion the believer would die; (9) the Christian had to experience crucifixion, not just hold the theory of it, if he was to enjoy the resurrection that followed death; (10) crucifixion was experienced by the believer acknowledging and repudiating the evil nature and by surrendering it up to God for destruction; (11) crucifixion was experienced by the Christian reckoning himself dead in an act of true faith; (12) the Christian's experience of crucifixion was psychologically similar to the actual crucifixion of Christ in loss, surrender, rejection, and detachment from the world; (13) the Christian had to bear the cross daily in obedience to Christ, which meant suffering for His sake; (14) the cross led to the resurrection. The study found that the crucifixion of the evil nature was accomplished by man meeting certain conditions so that God could do His work. The work of God that was mentioned in the previous discussion was developed in full under the section titled "'The Divine Conquest'."

Summary of "'The Pursuit of God' Begun"

Tozer described the new born Christian as having a divinely given desire for God and holiness, which sent him on a never-ending pursuit of the infinite, Triune God. In his desire for holiness and a deeper acquaintance with God, however, he had to face the problem of an indwelling evil nature, a carnal bent that caused a struggle for continued victory and that veiled his heart from a full view of God's face. In actual life many Christians allowed the desire for holiness and God to be nearly destroyed. If a Christian wanted God, his desire had to become wholehearted, he had to face up to the presence of the carnal nature, and he had to be willing to take certain other steps to gain complete deliverance. The steps he had to take were surrender and death. Surrender was an unreserved and full giving up of "things" and everything to God. He had to once-and-for-all allow God back on the throne of his heart and determine to exalt Him over everything and obey Him in everything. The results of surrender would be freedom from slavery to things and the beginning of a new power and quality of life. The victory also had to be won by the Christian being crucified. This crucifixion was not upon the cross of Christ, though it was made possible because of the Christian having been judicially identified with Christ on the cross. It was the Christian's own cross, which meant he had to actually experience for himself the death to the carnal self. The cross for the Christian meant what it had always meant, the total end of one order of life and the beginning of a new one. For the Christian it would be the death of the self-life. The cross was indispensable for this work of death; no human work would do. Nor could the

believer be raised to new life without this personal crucifixion; and, if he by-passed it, he would only die another death, one of irreparable loss. No theory of crucifixion would deliver him either, but only a real experience. This involved acknowledgment and repudiation of the carnal nature, a radical experience psychologically like that of Christ's physical crucifixion. The Christian had to yield, trust God to do the work of destroying the flesh, and reckon himself crucified with Christ. God did the rest. After that, the Christian had to carry the cross daily, which meant obedience to the will of God in all things.

II. "THE DIVINE CONQUEST"¹⁸²

The previous section on the Christian's pursuit of God dealt with two major ideas: the Christian's progressive pursuit of God and the definite experience of death, or crucifixion. Tozer's discussion of the crucifixion of the Christian focused primarily on man, nevertheless, he knew well and taught much about God's part in making the Christian fit for the closest of communion with Himself. His book The Divine Conquest, from which the title of this section was taken, centered, though not exclusively, upon what the title suggested: God's action in conquering man's heart. Nor did Tozer speak of this theme only in one book, but throughout his teaching he talked of God's desire and work in man's salvation. It was in keeping with his emphasis upon God

¹⁸²The Divine Conquest, op. cit., p. 17.

Himself.¹⁸³ Tozer taught explicitly that the regenerated man had to do his part in pursuing after holiness, but that after he had gone through the experiences of consecration and the surrender and repudiation of the sin nature, and after he had reckoned himself ". . . to have been crucified with Christ and to have risen again to newness of life,"¹⁸⁴ then "the divine conquest" began.¹⁸⁵

The material of this section on God's conquest of the surrendered Christian was placed under the following headings: The Doctrine of Christ, The Cleansing, The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit, and The Filling of the Holy Spirit.

The Doctrine of Christ

The doctrine of Christ in Tozer's theology was introduced at this point because of its relationship to his previously covered doctrines of God, man, and the beginnings of salvation, and to his doctrine of the divine conquest in the present section, and to his doctrine of holiness. Tozer himself did not devote an entire book, nor even a large part of a book, to Christ's person and work as he did to God in The Knowledge of the Holy and to the Holy Spirit in The Divine Conquest. The study did not conclude, however, that Christ had a lesser place in Tozer's theology. His doctrine of the Trinity, his individual articles about Christ, his constant references to Christ when speaking

¹⁸³Supra, Chapter II of the study.

¹⁸⁴The Divine Conquest, op. cit., p. 63.

¹⁸⁵Ibid.

about other things, and his belief in the Lordship of Christ showed the importance of Christ in his thought.

Christ in the Trinity. Tozer's doctrine of the Trinity was the one held by most Christians throughout the centuries. He said, "it is most important that we think of God as Trinity in Unity, neither confounding the Persons nor dividing the Substance. Only so may we think rightly of God and in a manner worthy of Him and of our own souls."¹⁸⁶ Pertinent to his doctrine of Christ was his belief in God being one and the persons of the Godhead being equal. He showed the relationship of Christ's human life to the Trinity, claiming that His incarnation in no way made Him less than God.¹⁸⁷ The practice of Christian's dividing the work of the Trinity, giving ". . . creation to the Father, redemption to the Son, and regeneration to the Holy Spirit" was deemed only partly true by him.¹⁸⁸ Believing that the smallest and greatest things were done by God as Trinity in Unity, he mentioned the following works attributed in Scripture to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit: creation, the Incarnation, the baptism of Christ, the atonement, the resurrection of Christ, the salvation of the individual, and the indwelling of deity in the Christian.¹⁸⁹ Christ,

¹⁸⁶The Knowledge of the Holy, op. cit., p. 28.

¹⁸⁷Ibid., pp. 28-30.

¹⁸⁸Ibid., p. 31.

¹⁸⁹Ibid. There was no need seen to give Tozer's doctrine of the Trinity beyond the brief statement above. It was noted, though, that in his chapter on the Trinity in The Knowledge of the Holy he put particular emphasis upon the place of faith in penetrating the mystery of the Trinity. Since God has said He is triune, the believer needs

therefore, as to His divinity, was no less, nor any greater than the Father and the Spirit, but equal. Christ *was* God.

Christ in all. The abundant number and the content of the references to Christ by Tozer indicated the importance of Christ in his theology. The study concluded in the second chapter that God was the center, sum, and circumference of Tozer's theology, yet he said Christ is God¹⁹⁰ and "Whatever God is the Man Christ Jesus is also."¹⁹¹ If God, in Tozer's teaching, requires man to be holy because He is holy, Christ is ". . . the perfect model after which redeemed human nature is to be fashioned."¹⁹² If God enters man at regeneration, so does Christ;¹⁹³ if God's work in the Christian destroys the sinful nature, "Christ has made full provision for our deliverance from the bondage of the flesh."¹⁹⁴ If men had had false concepts about God, so likewise they have thought wrongly about Christ.¹⁹⁵ If the Holy Spirit is God, "Being the Spirit of Jesus, the Holy Spirit will be found to be

no further proof; reflection upon the truth that has been revealed follows faith. He said, "Love and faith are at home in the mystery of the Godhead. Let reason kneel in reverence outside." p. 28.

¹⁹⁰That Incredible Christian, op. cit., p. 22.

¹⁹¹Ibid., p. 39.

¹⁹²The Root of the Righteous, op. cit., pp. 59, 60.

¹⁹³That Incredible Christian, op. cit., p. 39.

¹⁹⁴Ibid., p. 42.

¹⁹⁵The Root of the Righteous, op. cit., pp. 23-26, 72, 73. Cf. That Incredible Christian, op. cit., pp. 20-22.

exactly like Jesus!"¹⁹⁶ The Christian is to have an ever-expanding experience of God, and the same relationship is to be his with Christ.¹⁹⁷ While God Himself as a Person has almost been lost to Christians,¹⁹⁸

. . . popular fundamentalist theology has emphasized the utility of the cross rather than the beauty of the One who died on it. The saved man's relation to Christ has been made contractual instead of personal. The 'work' of Christ has been stressed until it has eclipsed the person of Christ. Substitution has been allowed to supersede identification. What He did for me seems to be more important than what He is to me.¹⁹⁹

Finally, Tozer believed that the high purpose for man in the beginning was for him to be "the dwelling place of God"²⁰⁰ and that "'God's Best Gift'" to man was Himself;²⁰¹ but, he said in the last sermon in his church that "'God's Greatest Gift to Man'" in redemption was "'Christ in you, the hope of glory.'"²⁰² Christ was in all that God was in. Christ was in all of Tozer's theology.

Christ is all. Christ is not only in all, according to Tozer, but He Himself is all. Speaking of who Christ is and of His relationship to the church, Tozer said, Christ is central, basic, and pre-eminent. Christ's centrality in His church means "He holds it

¹⁹⁶The Tozer Pulpit, II, op. cit., pp. 45, 47.

¹⁹⁷The Root of the Righteous, op. cit., p. 86.

¹⁹⁸The Pursuit of God, op. cit., pp. 13, 14.

¹⁹⁹Born After Midnight, op. cit., p. 133. Cf. The Root of the Righteous, op. cit., p. 71.

²⁰⁰Man: The Dwelling Place of God, op. cit., p. 10. ²⁰¹Supra, p.6.

²⁰²"God's Greatest Gift to Man," The Alliance Witness, Vol. 98 (July 24, 1963), p. 3.

together."²⁰³ Of Christ's basicality Tozer said, ". . . the whole Church of God rests down upon the shoulders of His Son. I think we might be able to go around the world and simply cry 'Christ is enough!' Jesus Christ is enough."²⁰⁴ Putting pluses after Christ ruins the individual and weakens the church. The way, the truth, the life, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, redemption, the wisdom and power of God, Christ is all of these, and ". . . He gathers up in Himself all things and in Him all things consist."²⁰⁵ So then, Christ ". . . is above all, presiding; and beneath all, upholding; and outside all, embracing; and inside of all, filling"; He is pre-eminent.²⁰⁶

The things Tozer said in the sections "Christ in all" and "Christ is all" added up to the same conclusion that was made about God at the end of Chapter Two: Christ is the center, circumference, and sum of Tozer's theology.²⁰⁷

The Lordship of Christ. Tozer believed in the truthfulness of the statement, "Christ is Lord," but there were at least three areas of interpreting and applying the truth of Christ's Lordship which caused him concern: mistaken ideas of who He is, the gap between belief and practice, and the dividing of His Saviourhood and Lordship. (1) "We must be extremely careful that the Christ we profess to follow is indeed

²⁰³"Total Commitment to Christ: What Is It," op. cit., p. 3.

²⁰⁴Ibid.

²⁰⁵Ibid.

²⁰⁶Ibid.

²⁰⁷Supra, p. 25. Cf. The Root of the Righteous, op. cit.
p. 71.

the very Christ of God," not a creation of the imagination.²⁰⁸ Tozer saw twisted conceptions of Christ in his day. One such Christ was

. . . a poetic fiction, a product of the romantic imagination and maudlin religious fancy. It is a Jesus, gentle, dreamy, shy, sweet, almost effeminate, and marvelously adaptable to whatever society He may find Himself in. He is cooed over by women disappointed in love, patronized by pro tem celebrities and recommended by psychiatrists as a model of a well-integrated personality.²⁰⁹

What the early Church taught was the resurrection from the dead and exaltation at God's right hand of a man named Jesus. The New Testament teaches Christ as both God and man, but only one Christ. Some who acknowledge his deity have forgotten that while He was "God with men" on earth, now on the throne in heaven ". . . He is Man with God."²¹⁰ He is a glorified man, but nonetheless a true man, ". . . bearing out lineaments and dimensions, a visible and audible man whom any other man would recognize instantly as one of us":²¹¹

But more than this, He is heir of all things, Lord of all worlds, head of the church and the first-born of the new creation. He is the way to God, the life of the believer, the hope of Israel and the high priest of every true worshiper. He holds the keys of death and hell and stands as advocate and surety for everyone who believes on Him in truth.²¹²

The apostles did not need to declare the pre-eminence of God, but of a man. Christians today need a Christology which not only says Christ is God, but believes He is a man glorified. To have the power of the

²⁰⁸ Ibid., p. 23.

²⁰⁹ Man: The Dwelling Place of God, op. cit., p. 143.

²¹⁰ Ibid., p. 141.

²¹¹ Ibid., p. 142.

²¹² Ibid.

early believers, modern Christians must believe as they believed, and they ". . . believed that Jesus of Nazareth, a man they knew, had been raised to a position of Lordship over the universe," "and they believed they had a God-approved man representing them in heaven."²¹³ Another Christ was "That Utilitarian Christ."²¹⁴ Christ was thought to help a "pious prize fighter" knock someone out, a parson athlete to win the high jump, a businessman to underbid a competitor for a valued contract, and ". . . to lend succor to a praying movie actress while she plays a role so lewd as to bring the blood to the face of a professional prostitute."²¹⁵ These actions, he said, are completely out of character for the Christ revealed in the Bible. If those who propound this Christ of utility know the implications of "their shoddy doctrine," yet still offer him to the world as Saviour, then they do not believe in the deity or the Lordship of Christ.²¹⁶ (2) It was Tozer's belief that not only were there false ideas about Christ, but that Christ had very little authority among ". . . those that protest the loudest that they are in spiritual descent from our Lord and His apostles, namely the evangelicals."²¹⁷ Christ is "little more than a beloved symbol," His Lordship has been for the most part "relegated to the hymnal," or

²¹³Ibid., pp. 143, 144.

²¹⁴The Root of the Righteous, op. cit., pp. 23-26.

²¹⁵Ibid., p. 24.

²¹⁶Ibid., p. 25.

²¹⁷"The Waning Authority of Christ in the Churches," The Alliance Witness, Vol. 98 (May 15, 1963), p. 3.

if His Lordship is taught it is not often practiced in daily living.²¹⁸

Tozer asked people to answer questions about how much authority Christ actually had in the church board, Sunday school committee, conference, foreign missions board, worship services, the theological schools, and in the moral problems of the believer. Men make the decisions, not Christ; He is asked to bless plans, but has no vote.²¹⁹ Tozer said, "All religious activities from the simplest act of an individual Christian to the ponderous and expensive operations of a whole denomination may be proved by the answer to the question, Is Jesus Christ Lord in this act?"²²⁰ (3) Finally, Tozer pointed out the wrong practice of dividing Christ's Saviourhood and Lordship. One practice is believing that Christ can be taken as Saviour now, but that discipleship can be postponed indefinitely or never accepted. When the Lordship of Christ is left out, the following substitutes fill His place: religious feelings for Christ, divorced from cross-carrying and obedience to Him; literalism, which leads to suffering, sacrificing, and working, but not to true discipleship, separation, and crucifixion; and self-originated, self-done Christian service.²²¹ Another practice is to tell the sinner to take Christ as Saviour and to plead with saved persons to take Christ as Lord. "Almost all deeper life teaching is based upon this fallacy,

²¹⁸Ibid., pp. 3, 4.

²¹⁹Ibid., pp. 4, 7.

²²⁰Ibid., pp. 8, 13.

²²¹"Substitutes for Discipleship," The Alliance Witness, Vol. 94 (October 21, 1959), p. 2.

but because it contains a germ of truth its soundness is not questioned."²²² The fact is, said Tozer, Christ Himself, not His Saviourhood, Lordship, atonement, cross, or priesthood is the object of the faith that saves. The believer may go on to know Christ more and more in the various meanings He holds, but "it is altogether doubtful whether any man can be saved who comes to Christ for His help but with no intention to obey Him. Christ's saviourhood is forever united to His lordship."²²³

Christ and holiness. In a chapter on "The Grace of God" in one of his books, Tozer defined grace as ". . . the good pleasure of God that inclines Him to bestow benefits upon the undeserving."²²⁴ He added a couple paragraphs later, "Grace takes its rise far back in the heart of God, in the awful and incomprehensible abyss of His holy being; but the channel through which it flows out to men is Jesus Christ, crucified and risen."²²⁵ It was logical, therefore, that Tozer said something about Christ as the channel for holiness.²²⁶ Drawing from

²²²The Root of the Righteous, op. cit., p. 84.

²²³Ibid., p. 85. Cf. That Incredible Christian, op. cit., pp. 18, 19. On p. 111 of That Incredible Christian he says that cross carrying is a mark of "the spiritual man." Among other things, cross carrying means he is "committed to the Lordship of Christ . . ."

²²⁴The Knowledge of the Holy, op. cit., p. 100.

²²⁵Ibid.

²²⁶Since the above section and the following section on "Cleansing" covered similar material, some of the same material on holiness and cleansing appeared twice, and some was summarized in one section and expanded in another.

the materials up to this point in the study and from additional materials, the following statements, or groups of statements, were made concerning Tozer's teaching about Christ and holiness. (1) Whatever Tozer set forth concerning God's holiness could be said of Christ's holiness because Christ, he said, is God.²²⁷ (2) Christ's Incarnation in human flesh did not change His holiness; He still acted according to His holiness. Christ, in entering man at regeneration, continues to act in holiness; this is the way He makes the Christian holy, using the redeemed human nature for expressing His moral perfections.²²⁸ (3) Holiness was equated by Tozer with Christlikeness: the uncrucified carnal nature will rob the believer of "Christlikeness of character";²²⁹ not many have a strong desire to get rid of unholiness and wear Christlikeness;²³⁰ the desire for God and holiness will lead to ". . . steady growth in grace and a constant progress toward Christlikeness";²³¹ the Christian's ideal is not the symmetry of the various philosophical systems such as Confucius' "'middle way'" or Aristotle's perfect balance between defect and excess, but to be ". . . conformed to the likeness of Christ";²³² Christ acts in the believer as He did when walking the earth,

²²⁷Supra, pp. 11-15, 20-28, 31-37, 46, 47, 56-61.

²²⁸Supra, p. 47.

²²⁹Supra, p. 83.

²³⁰Supra, p. 57.

²³¹The Root of the Righteous, op. cit., p. 117.

²³²That Incredible Christian, op. cit., p. 53.

in holiness, but Christians sometimes do not act in a Christlike manner because of competition from the old nature;²³³ Christ is the pattern after which the Christian's nature is to be made.²³⁴ Men need the Spirit of Christ to be Christlike.²³⁵ (4) The blood of Christ brings holiness: the blood of Christ cleanses;²³⁶ it cleanses not only sins committed, ". . . but the very inward desires so that we will not want to sin";²³⁷ holiness is required of God's children because God has made holiness, by impartation and imputation, ". . . available to them through the blood of the Lamb . . .";²³⁸ Christians faced with their unholiness in the presence of God's absolute holiness and knowing the command to be holy, must hide "in the wounds of Christ" and believe that God imputes holiness to them in Christ while He brings them to where they ". . . may be partakers of His holiness."²³⁹ (5) Christ's cross brings death, deliverance, and holiness: His cross set the meaning of the cross for all of His followers, which is shame, rejection, loss, and death;²⁴⁰ Christ's cross purchased judicial crucifixion for all Christians, making possible their deliverance from

²³³Ibid., p. 40.

²³⁴Supra, p. 92.

²³⁵The Tozer Pulpit, II, op. cit., p. 60.

²³⁶The Tozer Pulpit, I, op. cit., pp. 79, 125.

²³⁷The Root of the Righteous, op. cit., p. 118.

²³⁸The Knowledge of the Holy, op. cit., p. 113.

²³⁹Ibid., p. 114.

²⁴⁰Supra, pp. 79-86.

carnality;²⁴¹ Christ's cross opened the way into the Holy of Holies of the Presence of God.²⁴² (6) Christ brings purity of life: redemption in Christ ". . . has sufficient moral power to enable us to live in a state of purity and love where our whole life will be a prayer";²⁴³ "There is a power in Christ that can enable the worst of us to live lives of purity and love";²⁴⁴ purity of life for the Christian is possible through faith in the risen Christ;²⁴⁵ a pure walk is possible only in Christ.²⁴⁶ (7) Christ's resurrection life is the basis of the Christian's deliverance and victory.²⁴⁷ (8) Christ is sanctification;²⁴⁸ His call is to holiness;²⁴⁹ faith in Him brings purification to the Christian;²⁵⁰ His Spirit is the Spirit of holiness;²⁵¹ Christians will have to answer to Christ for their intention or lack of intention to be holy;²⁵² Christ's redemption, besides to justify and glorify, was to sanctify ". . . a company of persons salvaged from the ruin of the human race."²⁵³

²⁴¹Supra, pp. 78, 92; The Root of the Righteous, op. cit., p. 83.

²⁴²The Pursuit of God, op. cit., pp. 36, 43.

²⁴³The Root of the Righteous, loc. cit.

²⁴⁴Of God and Men, op. cit., p. 76.

²⁴⁵The Tozer Pulpit, I, op. cit., p. 79.

²⁴⁶The Tozer Pulpit, II, loc. cit.

²⁴⁷That Incredible Christian, op. cit., p. 34; Supra, p. 84.

²⁴⁸Supra, p. 94. ²⁴⁹Born After Midnight, op. cit., p. 141.

²⁵⁰Supra, pp. 84-86. ²⁵¹The Tozer Pulpit, II, op. cit., p. 62.

²⁵²Supra, p. 60. ²⁵³Born After Midnight, op. cit., p. 139.

Summary of the Doctrine of Christ

Tozer firmly believed in Christ's deity and place in the Trinity, His indwelling man in regeneration, His centrality, basicity, and pre-eminence in the Church, His Lordship, His humanness, and His exaltation in heaven as a glorified man. He criticized false views of Christ and emphasized the importance of thinking rightly about Him. He believed in the various works and offices of Christ, but felt that men were called to faith and attachment to the whole Christ and to Him as a person, not just His work. He believed that Christ was to be received and followed as Lord in the initial encounter with Him, not in the second experience of a deeper life. He taught the importance of Christ and holiness: His holiness was God's holiness; His holy character was the pattern for the Christian's life; His shed blood purchased deliverance from the evil nature for the Christian and brought holiness; His crucifixion was the pattern and basis for the Christian's own crucifixion; His power was sufficient for the Christian to live a pure life; He was sanctification and His call was to holiness; He was the object of faith for purification; His redemption was to sanctify people; and He would judge people for their intentions about holiness.

Conclusions

From the foregoing evidence three conclusions were made: (1) Christ's person and work were vital to Tozer's theology; (2) Christ held the same place in his theology as did God--the circumference, center, and sum; (3) Christ's person and work were important in his doctrine of holiness.

Cleansing

The relationship of God and Christ to the Christian's pursuit of God and holiness was demonstrated in the previous material of this chapter. It was said that Tozer saw the Christian's spiritual experiences after regeneration as not only a pursuit by the Christian, but a conquest by God. The pursuit of the Christian brought him to the place where he had done all he could to fulfill his desire for God and holiness; he had sought, surrendered, died, and, looking on Christ with the gaze of faith, had reckoned himself crucified and risen with Him. The next step was God's, and Tozer called this step "the divine conquest."²⁵⁴ What God did for man in His conquest was, according to Tozer, two-fold: He cleansed and filled.

Tozer's beliefs concerning the cleansing and filling were the final answers to a series of questions raised in Chapters Two and Three of the study.²⁵⁵ The first question, "How can an unholy man know a holy God?" received the brief answer in Chapter Two that man must become like God.

The second question was, "How can man become holy in order to know God?" Tozer's answer to this was given in part in Chapter Three of the study. The beginning of man becoming holy, he believed, was in regeneration, for the sinner was not only declared free from guilt, but was morally changed within so that he was no longer a sinner. Regeneration also began for the Christian a life-long pursuit of the knowledge

²⁵⁴The Divine Conquest, op. cit., p. 63.

²⁵⁵Supra, pp. 14, 15, 20-22, 37.

of God.²⁵⁶ On his pursuit, however, and in spite of the initial holiness received in regeneration, he experienced two things: a desire for holiness and the fullness of God, and the discovery of an unholy root of sin deep inside his heart which warred against his new nature, militated against his reaching the goal of intimate fellowship with God, and hindered his progress in spiritual things.²⁵⁷ Plainly, Tozer believed that the problem of an unholy man becoming holy was not completely answered by the work of regeneration.

The question now changes from "How can man become holy" to "How can the Christian become holy in order to know God?" The answer to that question began with the Christian's full surrender to God and with his death by crucifixion. Tozer described in detail how the Christian's pursuit of God led him through consecration and daily dyings to his personal calvary. Speaking of the crisis of calvary, Tozer emphasized that it was there that the pursuit of the Christian gave way to a conquest by God. The Christian's part in becoming holy was surrender and faith. God's part was to put the evil nature to death and fill the Christian with His Spirit.

These answers raised further questions for the study. What did Tozer believe happened when God crucified the evil nature and filled the Christian with His Spirit? He had said, "One of the heaviest problems in the Christian life is that of sanctification: how to become as pure as we know we ought to be and must be if we are to enjoy

²⁵⁶ Supra, pp. 44-47, 52-55.

²⁵⁷ Supra, pp. 56-68.

intimate communion with a holy God."²⁵⁸ He had stated that God did not require man to be as holy as He was, for His holiness was infinite, absolute, and therefore not communicable.²⁵⁹ What, then, was Tozer's definition, or description, of the holiness which the Christian received from God? Also, did Tozer actually believe that God made the Christian holy in fact; did he believe that holiness was a real possession, not just a goal for which to strive? If so, how did God make the Christian holy and when? Was it gradual or instantaneous? What was the filling with the Holy Spirit, and what relationship did it have to holiness? These questions were dealt with in this section under the headings "How holy is the Christian made?" and "How does God make the Christian holy?," and in the next two sections titled "The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit" and "The Filling with the Spirit."

"How holy is the Christian made?" Without doubt Tozer believed in the necessity of the Christian being made holy, as these statements showed: "All our powers must be sanctified and brought under the direction of the Spirit";²⁶⁰ "The whole purpose of God in redemption is to make us holy and to restore us to the image of God";²⁶¹ "The Lord's people ought to be a sanctified, pure, clean people, but we are a carnal

²⁵⁸That Incredible Christian, op. cit., pp. 33, 34.

²⁵⁹Supra, pp. 13, 14.

²⁶⁰"Temperance, the Rare Virtue," loc. cit. Cf. That Incredible Christian, op. cit., p. 37.

²⁶¹The Root of the Righteous, op. cit., p. 25.

crowd."²⁶² He believed in "heart cleansing," and "purity of heart."²⁶³ But what did he mean by holiness, purity, cleansing, and sanctification? First, he believed in holiness of intention, not in "sinless perfection."²⁶⁴ Abraham, David, Elijah, and others set their hearts to exalt God over all, and God accepted their intention for what it was. "Not perfection, but holy intention made the difference."²⁶⁵ Tozer believed in the sufficiency of Christ's redemption to deliver from "the bondage of sin"; but, "this," he added, "is not to support the man-made doctrine of 'sinless perfection'; it is rather to declare the God-inspired doctrine that it is possible to 'walk in the Spirit' and so 'not fulfil the lust of the flesh.'"²⁶⁶ Second, he said, ". . . whatever else the word holy may mean it does undoubtedly carry with it the idea of moral purity."²⁶⁷ Referring to Romans 8:5-7, he equated the mind of "carnal mind" with the desires, and he defined the mind, or desires, as ". . . the gravitational pull of the heart in one direction or another" ²⁶⁸ He insisted that for spiritual progress the desires of the heart needed to be sanctified because they perverted

²⁶²The Tozer Pulpit, II, op. cit., p. 60.

²⁶³The Root of the Righteous, op. cit., pp. 123, 101.

²⁶⁴Ibid., pp. 82, 83; The Pursuit of God, op. cit., p. 106.

²⁶⁵Ibid.

²⁶⁶The Root of the Righteous, loc. cit.

²⁶⁷The Divine Conquest, op. cit., p. 99. The above quote was in the context of speaking about the Holy Spirit.

²⁶⁸The Root of the Righteous, op. cit., p. 116.

moral judgment, making impure things look pure. The purification of the desires he saw as an actual possibility. The results would be the destruction of the desire to sin and the moving of the desires toward righteousness ". . . by a kind of gentle moral gravitation."²⁶⁹ Third, Tozer exhorted Christians about being delivered from "dispositional," or "inward," sins.²⁷⁰ He listed some of them as ". . . Sensitiveness, irritability, churlishness, faultfinding, peevishness, temper, resentfulness, cruelty, uncharitable attitudes . . ."²⁷¹ These, he claimed, killed "the spirit of the church" and slowed down the progress of the gospel in the community, turning many people away from Christ. That there was a remedy for "uncleansed evil" and "unholy tempers" was made clear by Tozer in the statement, "There is a power in Christ that can enable the worst of us to live lives of purity and love. We have but to seek it and to lay hold of it in faith. God will not disappoint us."²⁷² Fourth, Tozer defined the word "sanctify" as "to make holy"²⁷³ and to "make bad hearts good."²⁷⁴ He distinguished "sanctify" from three other terms: justify, which he said was "to declare righteous before God," or to "cancel past sins"; regenerate, which he defined as making "dead men live"; and glorify, which he said was "to remake the

²⁶⁹Ibid., pp. 116-118.

²⁷⁰Of God and Men, op. cit., pp. 75, 76.

²⁷¹Ibid., p. 75.

²⁷²Ibid., pp. 75, 76.

²⁷³Born After Midnight, op. cit., p. 139.

²⁷⁴Paths to Power, op. cit., p. 30.

entire personality after the image of Christ."²⁷⁵ He knew also that sanctification of the whole heart had actually been experienced by some people.²⁷⁶ Fifth, holiness, cleansing, purity, and sanctification were not explicitly said by Tozer to be the result of the crucifixion of the carnal nature, but it was implied by his separation of the work of crucifixion and the filling with the Spirit. His order of the divine conquest seemed to be crucifixion, holiness, filling. He implied in the following passage that a man had to be crucified before the Spirit would enter in His fulness:

This contest between the indwelling Deity and our own fallen propensities occupies a large place in New Testament theology. But the warfare need not continue indefinitely. Christ has made full provision for our deliverance from the bondage of the flesh. A frank and realistic presentation of the whole thing is set forth in Romans six and seven, and in the eighth chapter a triumphant solution is discovered: It is, briefly, through a spiritual crucifixion with Christ followed by resurrection and an infusion of the Holy Spirit.²⁷⁷

He said that the Holy Spirit would not dwell in an impure vessel. Yet, in several places, he also attributed the work of purity and holiness to the Holy Spirit.²⁷⁸ As a rule, the study found, Tozer dealt more with crucifixion than with the subject of cleansing, and appeared to give as

²⁷⁵Born After Midnight, loc. cit., ; Paths to Power, loc. cit.

²⁷⁶The Tozer Pulpit, II, op. cit., p. 20. He noted in The Divine Conquest, pp. 104, 105, that sanctification extended also to the will of man, for "until the will is sanctified the man is still a rebel" Cf. "Total Commitment to Christ: What Is It?," op. cit., pp. 4, 5.

²⁷⁷That Incredible Christian, op. cit., pp. 42, 43.

²⁷⁸The Tozer Pulpit, II, op. cit., pp. 62, 83, 87; Born After Midnight, op. cit., p. 122.

much attention to the filling with the Spirit as to crucifixion. Sixth, on the subject of crucifixion, did Tozer believe it eradicated the sinful nature inherited from Adam? The word "eradication" was not found in his terminology. Concerning what happened to the sin nature in crucifixion, however, he said, "There must be a work of God in destruction before we are free."²⁷⁹ Also, the terminology of the next quotation was noted:

The ancient curse will not go out painlessly; the tough old miser within us will not lie down and die obedient to our command. He must be torn out of our heart like a plant from the soil; he must be extracted in agony and blood like a tooth from the jaw. He must be expelled from our souls by violence as Christ expelled the money changers from the temple.²⁸⁰

Again, he said the "Adam-life" must be surrendered ". . . to a merciful end upon the cross."²⁸¹ Tozer's definition of the cross gave no hint of compromise with the carnal nature, but spelled out its real death. His teaching about the problem of remaining sin in the Christian did not speak of suppression, or counter-action, as the remedy, but only of a complete end by crucifixion and destruction.²⁸² Seventh, Tozer taught holiness as relative, contingent, imputed, and imparted. By relative and contingent he meant that heavenly beings and men on earth depended upon God for their holiness, and that the holiness which they received

²⁷⁹The Pursuit of God, op. cit., p. 46. My italics. Cf. p. 23.

²⁸⁰Ibid., p. 30. My italics.

²⁸¹The Divine Conquest, op. cit., p. 63. My italics. Cf. The Root of the Righteous, op. cit., p. 62.

²⁸²There were passages with apparent contradictions and confusion of terms. Tozer's clearest statements were the basis of the conclusions about his doctrine of holiness.

was not God's absolute holiness.²⁸³ By imputed and imparted holiness he meant that God attributes holiness to the Christian while He makes him holy: "Above all we must believe that God sees us perfect in His Son while He disciplines and chastens and purges us that we may be partakers of His holiness."²⁸⁴ Eighth, holiness for Tozer did not mean deliverance from mistakes, infirmities, temptation, and ignorance, nor from the need for discipline, obedience, suffering, cross-carrying, and growth.²⁸⁵ He pointed out "The Inadequacy of 'Instant Christianity'" by saying,

It fails to understand the true nature of the Christian life, which is not static but dynamic and expanding. It overlooks the fact that a new Christian is a living organism as certainly as a new baby is, and must have nourishment and exercise to assure normal growth. . . .

By trying to pack all of salvation into one experience, or two, the advocates of instant Christianity flaunt the law of development which runs through all nature. They ignore the sanctifying effects of suffering, cross carrying and practical obedience. They pass by the need for spiritual training, the necessity of forming right religious habits and the need to wrestle against the world, the devil and the flesh.²⁸⁶

Holiness delivered from sin, but not from humanity and the need for further spiritual progress. Finally, holiness did not mean just a negative work, but also positive results. The one who gives Christ full sway, Tozer wrote, will have Christ living within and expressing

²⁸³The Knowledge of the Holy, op. cit., p. 113.

²⁸⁴Ibid., p. 114.

²⁸⁵The subject of the Christian's experience after sanctification was discussed in the section "'The Pursuit of God' Continued."

²⁸⁶That Incredible Christian, op. cit., pp. 24, 25.

Himself as He did on earth:

Christ in a believer's heart will act the same as He acted in Galilee and Judea. His disposition is the same now as then. He was holy, righteous, compassionate, meek and humble then, and He has not changed. He is the same wherever He is found, whether it be at the right hand of God or in the nature of a true disciple. He was friendly, loving, prayerful, kindly, worshipful, self-sacrificing while walking among men; is it not reasonable to expect Him to be the same when walking in men?²⁸⁷

The next question, after "How holy is the Christian made," was "How is the Christian made holy?"

"How is the Christian made holy?" That the Christian was made holy by his being crucified was already covered; and, although Tozer insisted constantly that the Christian's experience of dying out to self was an actual emotional experience,²⁸⁸ he also declared the Christian's inability to crucify and sanctify himself.²⁸⁹ He exhorted believers to insist upon and expect God's work of putting the sin nature to death.²⁹⁰ Speaking of the Christian's desire for holiness and his inability to capture it alone, Tozer referred to A. B. Simpson, founder of the Christian and Missionary Alliance:

A. B. Simpson knew by experience the unavailing struggle to be holy, and he knew also the Bible way to holiness. In a little hymn composed to be spoken at the conclusion of one of his sermons he

²⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 40. The positive aspect and results of God's work in conquering the Christian were covered in detail in the sections "The Filling with the Spirit" and "'The Pursuit of God' Continued."

²⁸⁸ The Pursuit of God, op. cit., p. 46.

²⁸⁹ "How to Avoid Year-end Regrets," The Alliance Weekly, Vol. 89 (December 29, 1954), p. 2.

²⁹⁰ The Pursuit of God, op. cit., pp. 46, 47.

states it this way:

I take Him as my holiness,
My spirit's spotless, heavenly dress;
I take 'The Lord my righteousness,'
I take, He undertakes.

We have but to abandon the effort to be holy and trust God to do the work within us. He will surely undertake.²⁹¹

Sometimes, Tozer related, the seeking Christian gets into trouble in his search for holiness. He either struggles to make himself holy, without success; or, he seeks "to achieve a state of spiritual passivity" and waits for God to make him holy "as one might sit down and wait for a robin egg to hatch or rose to burst into bloom."²⁹²

Tozer saw both sides. If God, however, had to do a work of holiness in the Christian, what did Tozer believe about it? Already established was his teaching that God destroyed the carnal nature, and that the destruction was subsequent to regeneration. Besides this he also taught it as an instantaneous destruction. Of the cross, he said, "It does not keep its victim hanging there forever. There comes a moment when its work is finished and the suffering victim dies."²⁹³ His language in one sentence about sanctification strongly suggested both a thorough and a crisis work: "Some people that are overwhelmed with the desire to be free from their sin have had refining fire go

²⁹¹That Incredible Christian, op. cit., p. 34.

²⁹²Ibid., p. 54.

²⁹³The Pursuit of God, op. cit., p. 47. Cf. The Divine Conquest, op. cit., p. 62.

through their hearts sanctifying the whole."²⁹⁴ He admitted that the warfare of the carnal nature went on "continually in most believers," and that it was "accepted as inevitable"; but he declared, ". . . the New Testament does not so teach."²⁹⁵ For Christian victory, sin had to end sometime and holiness begin.²⁹⁶ Without doubt, he taught a process of sanctification, but whether or not he equated it with inbred sin was undetermined.²⁹⁷ He also warned against the dangers of over-emphasizing the once-done aspect of salvation, either as one work or two.²⁹⁸ Nevertheless, Tozer taught holiness as a present possibility. He said he believed the song "'When I reach the pearly gates, I'll then put in my plea; I was once a guilty sinner, but Jesus died for me'"; but, he added, Christ's promise of cleansing, forgiveness, and heaven also means that He was saying "'Another thing, son, my blood is going to cleanse and make you clean, and my Spirit is going to enter you and help

²⁹⁴The Tozer Pulpit, II, op. cit., p. 20. Cf. The Root of the Righteous, op. cit., pp. 116-118, where a comparison of sanctification and growth appeared.

²⁹⁵That Incredible Christian, op. cit., p. 40.

²⁹⁶"Salvation Walks the Earth," loc. cit.

²⁹⁷The Divine Conquest, op. cit., pp. 104-106; Born After Midnight, op. cit., p. 122; The Root of the Righteous, op. cit., pp. 137, 138.

²⁹⁸That Incredible Christian, op. cit., pp. 23-25; The Root of the Righteous, op. cit., p. 11; Born After Midnight, op. cit., pp. 15-18. Progressive sanctification and spiritual growth were discussed in the study under "'The Pursuit of God' Continued."

to live a right life!"²⁹⁹ Christ could save in the judgment and in the "now."³⁰⁰ Finally, as for God's means for making the Christian holy, it was by Christ, the Holy Spirit, the blood of the atonement and fire.³⁰¹

Summary of Cleansing

Tozer believed that God alone made the consecrated, surrendered, trusting Christian holy by crucifying the sin nature. He believed that this crucifixion was the destruction of the sin nature by an instantaneous work of God, resulting in moral purity and the enablement to live a pure life. The holiness received by the Christian from God's work was not absolute perfection; nor was it release from human frailties and temptations, or exemption from the need for discipline, cross-carrying, obedience, and growth in grace. It did mean deliverance from inner sins such as irritability, temper, uncharitable attitudes, and resentfulness. The work of purification was real, and it extended to the Christian's whole heart. Tozer taught holiness of heart as a present possibility through the work of God, including Christ and His atoning blood and the Holy Spirit.

The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit

Tozer's theology, and his doctrine of holiness in particular, included the importance of the work and person of the Holy Spirit.

²⁹⁹The Tozer Pulpit, I, op. cit., p. 79. ³⁰⁰Ibid., p. 80.

³⁰¹Born After Midnight, op. cit., p. 122; The Tozer Pulpit, II, op. cit., pp. 20, 60, 62; The Root of the Righteous, op. cit., pp. 82, 83; The Tozer Pulpit, I, op. cit., p. 125.

Since his basic doctrine of the Holy Spirit was the one held by most evangelicals, it was subordinated in this study in favor of his distinctive teachings about the Spirit. His own emphases, his disagreement with and criticisms of other views, his acute analysis about the present state of the doctrine and experience of the Holy Spirit, these were the things which characterized his teachings, not the perfunctory repetition of established truth.

Tozer's distinctive teachings about the Holy Spirit were summarized under four subjects: the neglect of the Spirit, thinking about the Spirit, the need for and right of the Spirit in the Church, and the filling with the Spirit. The last mentioned subject was an integral part of his doctrine of holiness and was treated in a separate section, but it still depended upon the other three for the completeness of its meaning and significance.

The neglect of the Spirit. To Tozer one of the tragedies of the evangelicalism of his day was the neglect of the Holy Spirit of God in doctrine and in experience. He said, "So completely do we ignore Him that it is only by courtesy that we can be called Trinitarian."³⁰² When writing of the neglect of the doctrine of the Spirit, he made a distinction between "formal creed" and "working creed."³⁰³ The latter, he noted, was sound, for evangelicals had stayed close in their doctrinal statements to the Biblical teaching; but he analyzed the practical situation of the Church as follows:

³⁰²The Divine Conquest, op. cit., p. 65.

³⁰³Ibid.

A doctrine has practical value only as far as it is prominent in our thoughts and makes a difference in our lives. By this test the doctrine of the Holy Spirit as held by evangelical Christians today has almost no practical value at all. In most Christian churches the Spirit is quite entirely overlooked. Whether He is present or absent makes no real difference to anyone. Brief reference is made to Him in the Doxology and the Benediction. Further than that He might as well not exist.³⁰⁴

Tozer did not seem to know why the neglect of the Spirit existed, but he charged the historic church with having neglected the Spirit almost as much as contemporary evangelicals, and he could not justify the neglect of either in view of the emphasis upon the Spirit by the New Testament and the Bible generally.³⁰⁵ Furthermore, he saw the neglect of the doctrine of the Spirit as a cause for the lack of the Spirit's power in the church. The only way for His power to become effectively operative in the church again, Tozer said, is for Him to be emphasized, for when He gets into the teachers' thinking ". . . He will get into the expectation of the hearers," and when He ". . . ceases to be incidental and again becomes fundamental . . ." then His power will return.³⁰⁶

Having declared the fact of the neglect of the Holy Spirit, Tozer went on in The Divine Conquest to describe the person and work of the Holy Spirit.³⁰⁷ First, however, he pointed out two things. One,

³⁰⁴Ibid. Tozer's italics.

³⁰⁵"The Holy Spirit is Indispensable," The Alliance Witness, Vol. 97 (March 7, 1962), p. 2.

³⁰⁶The Divine Conquest, op. cit., p. 66. Tozer called Him "The Forgotten One," Ibid., p. 64.

³⁰⁷Ibid., pp. 66-109. Similar material was found in the following: The Tozer Pulpit, II, op. cit., pp. 38-50; How to be Filled with the

the average member of a church has such a vague conception of the Spirit that it is almost nonexistent, and yet, wanting ". . . to believe something, and not feeling up to the task of examining the whole truth in the light of Scripture he compromises by holding belief in the Spirit as far out from the center of his life as possible, letting it make no difference in anything that touches him practically."³⁰⁸ Yet, these persons are sincere in their efforts to be Christians.³⁰⁹ The second thing Tozer noted was the importance of distinguishing between "knowing" the Spirit and "knowing about" Him. A complete answer to the question "how should we think of the Spirit?," he said, might fill a dozen volumes, but Christian history shows that ". . . those who most enjoyed the power of the Spirit have had the least to say about Him by way of attempted definition."³¹⁰ Knowledge about the Spirit is important because it may spur a person on to know the Spirit personally, but there should never be an assumption that learning about Him means He is actually known. "Knowing Him comes only by a personal encounter with the Holy Spirit himself."³¹¹

Thinking about the Spirit.³¹² Tozer observed that the word "spirit" itself could tell something about the Holy Spirit: spirit is

Holy Spirit (Harrisburg, Pa.: Christian Publications, Inc., n.d.), pp. 3-9; and "Who Is the Holy Spirit," The Alliance Weekly, Vol. 86 (October 31, 1951), pp. 675, 676, 678.

³⁰⁸The Divine Conquest, op. cit., p. 66. ³⁰⁹Ibid.

³¹⁰Ibid., pp. 66, 67. ³¹¹Ibid., p. 68.

³¹²Ibid., p. 66. Since the study was not concerned with a

beyond, above, and different from matter, yet it has real existence. The Holy Spirit, he said, referring to the teachings of theology and the Bible, is a Person with the characteristics of personality: will, emotion, intellect, sight, hearing, and speaking, the ability to do anything personality can do.³¹³ The Holy Spirit is God, as truly as the Father and the Son are God: "Since He is the Spirit of the Father He feels toward His people exactly as the Father feels. He will always act like Jesus"³¹⁴ The Holy Spirit performs "the eternal purposes of God," doing one work toward nature, another one toward the world, and a yet different one toward the Church.³¹⁵ Tozer also described the Holy Spirit as the Illuminator, as power, and as Fire.³¹⁶ Still another characteristic of the Spirit that he mentioned was "penetrability."³¹⁷ That the Holy Spirit can penetrate matter, mind, or another spirit, is significant to the seeker, he said. "He can invade the human heart and make room for Himself without expelling anything essentially human. The integrity of the human personality remains unimpaired. Only moral evil is forced to withdraw."³¹⁸

detailed description of Tozer's whole theology, but only the broad outline, his description of the Holy Spirit is brief.

³¹³Ibid., pp. 68-70.

³¹⁴Ibid., pp. 70-74.

³¹⁵Ibid., p. 74.

³¹⁶Ibid., pp. 76-109.

³¹⁷Ibid., p. 69.

³¹⁸Ibid.

Besides the above teaching about the neglect of the Spirit, and about who and what the Spirit is, Tozer lifted up the Church's need for the Spirit and the right of the Spirit to be Lord of the Church.

The right of and the need for the Spirit in the Church. The two concepts of the Church's need for the Holy Spirit and His Lordship in the Church seemed to be wedded in Tozer's thinking, as the passages below demonstrated:

The truth is that God never fathered His Church apart from the Holy Spirit. We should be anointed with the Spirit. We are led of the Spirit. We are taught by the Spirit. The Spirit, then, is the medium, the divine solution, in which God holds His Church.

The Bible plainly indicates that God never dreamed of His people apart from the Holy Spirit.³¹⁹

.....

. . . it is possible to run a church and all of its activity without the Holy Spirit. You can organize it, get a board together, call a pastor, form a choir, launch a Sunday School and a ladies' aid society. You get it all organized--and the organization part is not bad. I'm for it. But . . . some people think that's all there is to it, you know.³²⁰

.....

The Spirit is faithful in His message that the restoration of the Spirit of God to His rightful place in the church and in the life of the believer is by all means the most important thing that could possibly take place. . . . Not by the eloquence of a man, not by good music, not by good preaching, but it is by the Spirit that God works His mighty works.³²¹

³¹⁹The Tozer Pulpit, II, op. cit., pp. 81, 82.

³²⁰Ibid., p. 38.

³²¹Ibid., p. 39.

I do not believe truly evangelical Christians would deny the deity of the Holy Spirit, but we have certainly neglected the truth of the place of the Holy Spirit's person in the Godhead, and of course, we have neglected His Lordship within the church.³²²

.

This is the tragedy and the woe of the hour--that we neglect the most important One who could possibly be in our midst--the Holy Spirit of God. Then, in order to make up for His absence, we have to do something to keep up our own spirits.³²³

The Holy Spirit, Tozer stated, is revealed in the Scriptures as indispensable, but because He has not been honored in the Church, church fellowship has "degenerated into a social fellowship with a mild religious flavor," and into the Church have been brought ". . . many unspiritual, non-spiritual and anti-spiritual teachers . . .".³²⁴

The Church has introduced various gimmicks to win and keep people, but the real tragedy, Tozer complained, is that ". . . these religious toys and trifles . . . have become a necessity, and the presence of the Eternal Spirit is not in our midst!"³²⁵

Following Tozer's teaching, then, the right of the Spirit to be honored and to rule over the Church was based upon His deity and His work. Among the specific works which, according to Tozer, the Church needed and the Spirit supplied were the illumination of divine truth, the bestowal of divine power, purity, and gifts, and the ability to worship.³²⁶

³²²Ibid., pp. 39, 40. ³²³Ibid., p. 49. ³²⁴Ibid., p. 40.

³²⁵"The Holy Spirit is Indispensable," loc. cit.; The Tozer Pulpit, II, op. cit., pp. 40, 41.

³²⁶The Divine Conquest, op. cit., pp. 74-109; The Tozer Pulpit, II, op. cit., pp. 92-105, 120-134.

Summary of the Doctrine of the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit was an important part of Tozer's theology and of his doctrine of holiness. He believed that the neglect of the doctrine and experience of the Spirit in the practical life of the Church was tragic, that it was one cause for the lack of the Spirit's power in the Church. After noting that most church members had a vague conception of the Holy Spirit, and that there was an important distinction between learning about the Spirit and knowing Him by personal experience, Tozer outlined several characteristics of the Holy Spirit. These were as follows: His reality, His personality, His equality in the Trinity (that He was God), His likeness to Christ, His work of performing the purposes of God, and His ability to penetrate the human heart, expelling evil and leaving humanity intact. Finally, Tozer believed in the Church's need of the Spirit and in the right of the Spirit to be Lord of the Church.

It was Tozer's belief also that the work and blessing of the Spirit were needed by the individual Christian and could be received by being filled with the Spirit. The need, provision and reception of the Spirit by the Christian and the Church were discussed next under the titles "The Filling with the Spirit: Needed and Provided" and "The Filling with the Holy Spirit: Preparation, Reception and Results." Although the individual was emphasized most because of the personal nature of the filling with the Spirit, Tozer believed in the Spirit-filled church.³²⁷

³²⁷Ibid., pp. 14-22.

The Filling with the Spirit: Needed and Provided

Tozer's view of what God did for the Christian in His work of conquest was previously said to be two-fold: cleansing and filling. The cleansing followed the Christian's willingness to be crucified with Christ, and was a negative work of destroying the inner evil nature. The connection between crucifixion and the filling with the Spirit was seen in Tozer's own words: "The filling with the Spirit, then, requires that we give up our all, that we undergo an inward death, that we rid our hearts of that centuries-old accumulation of Adamic trash and open all rooms to the heavenly Guest."³²⁸

As Tozer's beliefs concerning cleansing, purity, and sanctification raised questions about the meaning and extent of holiness, so his belief in the filling with the Spirit as part of the divine conquest raised questions. "Who may be filled with the Spirit?" "When and how may it be experienced?" "What are the results of the experience?" "How can a person be sure he has been filled with the Spirit?" "Why is the filling with the Spirit needed?" "Is it Scriptural?" Perhaps, all of these questions, and any others that might be raised, could be formed into one question, "What is the filling with the Holy Spirit?" Tozer's answer was presented in the next paragraphs.

The world, the Christian, and the Spirit. With the filling of the Spirit the study of Tozer's theology and his doctrine of holiness returned to his central theme: God indwelling men. Tozer the God-

³²⁸The Divine Conquest, op. cit., p. 126.

engrossed man said,

Here is the whole final message of the New Testament: Through the atonement in Jesus' blood sinful men may now become one with God. Deity indwelling men! That is Christianity in its fullest effectuation, and even those greater glories of the world to come will be in essence but a greater and more perfect experience of the soul's union with God.

Deity indwelling men! That, I say, is Christianity, and no man has experienced rightly the power of Christian belief until he has known this for himself as a living reality. Everything else is preliminary to this. Incarnation, atonement, justification, regeneration; what are these but acts of God preparatory to the work of invading and the act of indwelling the redeemed human soul? Man who moved out of the heart of God by sin now moves back into the heart of God by redemption. God who moved out of the heart of man because of sin now enters again His ancient dwelling to drive out His enemies and once more make the place of His feet glorious.³²⁹

For Tozer, the filling with the Holy Spirit was the culmination of God's work of redeeming the human spirit. The filling with the Spirit was, in his theology, at the end of a chain of events which included the fact of God, the creation of man in God's image, man's rebellion, his fall, his loss of God's image and presence, the Incarnation of Christ, and Christ's death, resurrection, and ascension. Tozer made clear his belief that the receiving of the fullness of the Holy Spirit was for the born-again man. The world, the sinners, he said, cannot receive Him because they do not know Him. "The world knows about good men," Tozer reasoned,

but the world has absolutely no affinity for the Holy Spirit, because even good men are under the judgment of God. The best that we have in the world, our universities, our humanitarian societies, the best we have apart from the new birth, apart from the presence

³²⁹Ibid., pp. 97, 98. My italics.

of God in the life of a man, is only corruption, and the wrath of God is upon it. The world cannot receive the Spirit of God.³³⁰

The Holy Spirit's relation to the sinner is as convictor of sin.³³¹ Nor did Tozer teach that the sinner receives the fullness of the Spirit in conversion. The sinner is regenerated by the Holy Spirit coming into him, or else he would not be converted, he explained. Every Christian definitely has a measure, a deposit of the Spirit in him,³³² nevertheless, ". . . it's quite another thing for the Holy Spirit to come down with His wings outspread, uninhibited, free and pleased to fill lives, and to fill churches, and to fill denominations. That's quite another thing."³³³ Tozer believed in the need for individual Christians and for churches to go beyond the birth by the Spirit and be filled with the Holy Spirit.

His teaching about the need for the Spirit was summarized under six topics: the comparison with the first Christians; the need for the Spirit of truth; the need for the Spirit of power; the need for the Spirit of purity; the need for the Spirit's gifts; the need for the Spirit's Presence in worship.

First century and contemporary Christians compared. The promise of the Holy Spirit, Tozer believed, is needed by modern day Christians, and is available to them. One of his proofs for his position was based on facts about the first Christians: they received the fullness of the

³³⁰The Tozer Pulpit, II, op. cit., p. 137. ³³¹Ibid., p. 56.

³³²Ibid., pp. 140, 141. ³³³Ibid., p. 141.

Spirit at Pentecost as already saved men; most current day Christians do not have what the disciples received at Pentecost; and, the endowment received by first century Christians was not the end of the bestowal of the Spirit.³³⁴ (1) The disciples, Tozer said, were saved men before Pentecost. They were called, chosen, and given authority by Jesus Christ. He Himself had been their teacher, and had given them authority, and "He does not give His authority to persons who have had no spiritual experience, you may be sure of that!"³³⁵ His disciples also knew Him intimately for three years, had seen His crucifixion, and had seen Him after the resurrection; "They had shown evidence of being truly converted persons."³³⁶ Tozer pointed to John 17, and said, "That doesn't sound at all like the Lord talking about a bunch of sinners still needing to be converted."³³⁷ (2) Furthermore, Tozer showed that Christians today do not have what the disciples received at Pentecost. He asked the question, "Have you ever seen anyone in the Christian church today that received at conversion what Peter received in the upper chamber?"³³⁸

When you were converted, did you have the power Peter had when he was filled? Bring it down farther--down to the common folk around Peter. Doesn't the Scripture make it pretty plain that they

³³⁴ Ibid., pp. 86-91, 121-125.

³³⁵ Ibid., p. 121.

³³⁶ Ibid.

³³⁷ Ibid., p. 122. Tozer criticized the belief that the disciples were converted at Pentecost, saying, "Frankly, I do not believe that at all. That is a modern twist that people have given doctrine in order to make room for their cold carnality." Ibid.

³³⁸ Ibid., p. 88.

received something and had something that we apparently don't have in this day in which we live? I think they did!³³⁹

Tozer looked ". . . at cold, dead, dried-up, fundamental textualism hanging out to dry" and said he did not believe what some people thought should be evident, that they had what the first Christians had.³⁴⁰ He called the Pentecostal Christians "thoroughbreds" blazing with power, life, and light, and called contemporary Christians "'scrubs'" compared to them, lacking their spiritual life.³⁴¹ (3) Another thing about the regenerated person and the "upper room" Christians was, according to Tozer, that the bestowal of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost was not a once-for-all historical occurrence. Tozer asked, "Where did we get this idea that because the disciples were filled with the Spirit back there in the first century, it is unnecessary for us to be filled with the Spirit now?"³⁴² Peter's new birth experience, Tozer reasoned, does not suffice for men now. Then, it is true that Peter's being filled with the Spirit does not suffice for men today.³⁴³ Tozer pointed out Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost, which told of the extent of the promise of the Spirit. "It wasn't just that first generation crowd--you and

³³⁹Ibid.

³⁴⁰Ibid., p. 89

³⁴¹Ibid. "When I was a boy on the farm in Pennsylvania, we had scrub chickens. Occasionally, my mother would try to improve the strain, bringing in some Plymouth Rocks or some other good breed. But just let the hens go awhile. In five or six years, they will revert back to type. They will go back to scrub, and you can't figure out what they are--just old, dried-up clucking biddies that lay little eggs, and not too many of them!" Ibid.

³⁴²Ibid., p. 91.

³⁴³Ibid., p. 88.

your children and as many as are afar off'--that's the promise."³⁴⁴

Tozer was concerned that Christians see the promise of the Spirit's filling not as being once-for-all fulfilled in an historical event, but as a present tense promise. He said, ". . . if the Lord's people were only half as eager to be filled with the Spirit as they are to prove that you can't be filled with the Spirit, the church would be crowded out."³⁴⁵ He wondered why it was ". . . that Christian people can go on and on and not be concerned about actually lacking the blessings and gifts promised by a loving Father in heaven."³⁴⁶ Some of these gifts and blessings were discussed next as needs in the individual and the Church, which the Holy Spirit would supply.

The Spirit of truth. Tozer devoted one entire chapter to the subject of "The Illumination of the Spirit," and one of his sermons in a volume sub-titled Ten Messages on the Holy Spirit was "How Christ Is Revealed by the HOLY SPIRIT: Not Through the Intellect!"³⁴⁷ His basic position was that the intellect was given by God for a purpose, but not to understand spiritual things, not for knowing Christ.³⁴⁸ Studying the Bible, or theology, will not of itself unveil spiritual truth, Tozer claimed. Methods of soul-winning alone will never win a

³⁴⁴Ibid., p. 87. Cf. Paths to Power, op. cit., pp. 32-34. These pages indicated Tozer believed in successive baptisms of the Spirit for advancing God's work, even upon those who were once filled.

³⁴⁵The Tozer Pulpit, II, op. cit., p. 80. ³⁴⁶Ibid., p. 81.

³⁴⁷The Divine Conquest, op. cit., pp. 76-84; The Tozer Pulpit, II, op. cit., pp. 23-36. Cf. The Divine Conquest, op. cit., pp. 101-103.

³⁴⁸The Tozer Pulpit, II, op. cit., pp. 23-28.

soul. The Holy Spirit is indispensable for both activities.³⁴⁹ The notion in the Church that the mind can do what the Spirit is supposed to do has not only resulted in wrong thinking about things like Bible study and soul-winning, but has affected preaching, praying, and singing.³⁵⁰ Tozer said,

Those overtones of religious delight which accompany truth when the Spirit illuminates it are all but missing from the Church today. Those transporting glimpses of the Celestial Country are few and dim; the fragrance of 'Sharon's dewy Rose' is hardly discernible. Consequently we have been forced to look elsewhere for our delights and we have found them in the dubious artistry of converted opera singers or the tinkling melodies of odd and curious musical arrangements. We have tried to secure spiritual pleasures by working upon fleshly emotions and whipping up synthetic feeling by means wholly carnal. And the total effect has been evil.³⁵¹

.....

It was religion that put Christ on the cross, religion without the indwelling Spirit. It is no use to deny that Christ was crucified by persons who would today be called Fundamentalists. This should prove most disquieting if not downright distressing to us who pride ourselves on our orthodoxy. An unblessed soul filled with the letter of truth may actually be worse off than a pagan kneeling before a fetish. We are safe only when the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, only when our intellects are indwelt by the loving Fire that came at Pentecost. For the Holy Spirit is not a luxury, not something added now and again to produce a deluxe type of Christian once in a generation. No, He is for every child of God a vital necessity, and that He fill and indwell His people is more than a languid hope. It is rather an inescapable imperative.³⁵²

What, asked Tozer, will the Christian do about the truth that the Holy Spirit is needed for spiritual illumination? His answer of what should

³⁴⁹Ibid., pp. 28, 29, 34.

³⁵⁰Ibid., pp. 27, 28.

³⁵¹The Divine Conquest, op. cit., pp. 81, 82.

³⁵²Ibid., p. 103.

be done was to fling open the door of the personality to the Holy Spirit. The result would be more inner knowledge of God in a single moment than in a lifetime of learning without the Spirit. Yet, Tozer added, what has been learned, if it is truth, will be harmonized with the total person, his whole personality, his whole creed, and the totality of his thinking. Intellectual knowledge will not be thrown out, but set on fire.³⁵³ Tozer related his own experience:

If there is anything that God has done through me, it dates back to that solemn, awful, wondrous hour when the Light that never was on land or sea, the Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world, flashed in on my darkness. It was not my conversion--I had been converted, soundly converted. It was subsequent to conversion. How about you?³⁵⁴

The Spirit of power. Tozer said the following about the Church and the power of the Holy Spirit: "I think there can be no doubt that the need above all other needs in the Church of God at this moment is the power of the Holy Spirit."³⁵⁵ How did he define the power of the Spirit? First, he said, Christ did not teach His disciples to expect the reception of the Spirit and power, but the Spirit as power. The Spirit and the power are the same. Secondly, the phrase "'the power of God'" does not mean that power is something belonging to God, something that could have a separate existence from Him; but it means that power, like all of the other attributes of God, is "what God is."³⁵⁶ Next,

³⁵³The Tozer Pulpit, II, op. cit., p. 36.

³⁵⁴Ibid.

³⁵⁵The Divine Conquest, op. cit., p. 92.

³⁵⁶Ibid., pp. 85, 86. Tozer's italics. Tozer said, God is an undivided, unitary Being, and all of His attributes are not components

Tozer wrote, the power which Christ promised is not physical or mental power, though it may affect those realms. It is not the power of nature, such as lightening.³⁵⁷ "It is spiritual power. It is the kind of power that God is."³⁵⁸ Again, one meaning for power is "the ability to do."³⁵⁹ God gives a person the ability to do His work, such as making His Word clear, or winning souls. "Whatever you do in the name of God, He gives you the ability to do. He gives you the ability to be victorious, to live right, to behold Jesus and to live with heaven in view."³⁶⁰ How does power work? What does it do? What is it for? These questions Tozer answered as follows. It comes from outside as "a supernatural potency" into the person's nature to ultimately reproduce God's likeness within.³⁶¹ In its purest form, it is the Holy Spirit working ". . . by direct contact with the human spirit"; the

of His being, or He would be a "synthetic God." Ibid., p. 86. Of the disciples Tozer said, "The power was actually to be a person--He was to enter them and dwell within them." The Tozer Pulpit, II, op. cit., p. 123.

³⁵⁷The Divine Conquest, op. cit., pp. 88, 89.

³⁵⁸Ibid., p. 89.

³⁵⁹The Tozer Pulpit, II, op. cit., p. 56. "You know, because it is the Greek word from which our English word 'dynamite' comes, some of the brethren try to make out that the Holy Ghost is dynamite Dynamite was discovered less than 200 years ago, but this Greek word from which we get our word 'power' goes back to the time of Christ. It means 'ability to do'--that is all . . . just ability to do." Ibid., p. 57.

³⁶⁰Ibid., p. 57. Yet, Tozer said that the disciples had miracle working power before Pentecost. The power of the Spirit is more wonderful, something higher than miracle working, he said. Ibid., p. 125.

³⁶¹The Divine Conquest, op. cit., p. 87. Cf. p. 89.

Spirit may also use other means, such as sermons, songs, good deeds, or nature, but ". . . the final work will be done by the pressure of the inliving Spirit upon the human heart."³⁶² This power makes the things of heaven and earth real, but does not create non-existing objects; it ". . . reveals objects already present and hidden from the soul."³⁶³

In experience it is this way, Tozer said:

. . . this is likely to be the first felt in a heightened sense of the Presence of Christ. He is felt to be a real Person and to be intimately, ravishingly near. Then all other spiritual objects begin to stand out clearly before the mind. Grace, forgiveness, cleansing take on a form of almost bodily clearness. Prayer loses its unmeaning quality and becomes a sweet conversation with Someone actually there. Love for God and for the children of God takes possession of the soul. We feel ourselves near to heaven and it is now the earth and the world that begin to seem unreal. We know them now for what they are, realities indeed, but like stage scenery here for one brief hour and soon to pass away . . . Then the whole life changes to suit the new reality and the change is permanent. Slight fluctuations there may be . . . but the established direction is upward and the ground taken is held.³⁶⁴

The power of the Spirit, Tozer stated, is the great need of the Church. Life will never come from "more education, better organization, finer equipment, more advanced methods . . ."³⁶⁵ The average church service has it all as far as means: music, poetry, art, oratory, "solemn tones" and "symbolic vesture," but ". . . the one ominous weakness is the absence of the Spirit's power," and the service is meaningless and empty.³⁶⁶ Men may think, Tozer warned, that spiritual work can be done without spiritual power, but "The Holy Spirit is not a luxury meant to

³⁶²Ibid., pp. 89, 90.

³⁶³Ibid., p. 91.

³⁶⁴Ibid., pp. 91, 92.

³⁶⁵Ibid., p. 92.

³⁶⁶Ibid., p. 90.

make deluxe Christians, as an illuminated frontispiece and a leather binding make a deluxe book. The Spirit is an imperative necessity. Only the Eternal Spirit can do eternal deeds."³⁶⁷ He suggested that the Church stop its activity and meet the conditions for the Holy Spirit to come, and said,

So carnal is the body of Christians which composes the conservative wing of the Church, so shockingly irreverent are our public services in some quarters, so degraded are our religious tastes in still others, that the need for power could scarcely have been greater at any time in history. . . .

We may be sure of one thing, that for our deep trouble there is no cure apart from a visitation, yes, an invasion of power from above. Only the Spirit Himself can show us what is wrong with us and only the Spirit can prescribe the cure. Only the Spirit can save us from the numbing unreality of Spiritless Christianity. Only the Spirit can show us the Father and the Son. Only the inworking of the Spirit's power can discover to us the solemn majesty and the heart ravishing mystery of the Triune God.³⁶⁸

The Spirit of worship. Worship was mentioned previously in the discussion of man as the dwelling place of God, and the power of the Spirit. It was singled out here to show that Tozer believed specifically that the Christian's need for true worship was supplied by the Holy Spirit. The importance which he attached to worship, whether individual or corporate, was seen in passages such as the following: "The primary purpose of God in creation was to prepare moral beings spiritually and intellectually capable of worshiping Him";³⁶⁹ "That's

³⁶⁷Man: The Dwelling Place of God, op. cit., pp. 65, 66.

³⁶⁸The Divine Conquest, op. cit., pp. 92, 93. Tozer's italics.

³⁶⁹Born After Midnight, op. cit., p. 123. Cf. That Incredible Christian, op. cit., p. 37.

why we were born. Not to beget others and die; not to work, not to play only; but to worship. God made people to be worshipers";³⁷⁰ "I repeat, the mightiest calamity that has visited the world is that we have lost our worship";³⁷¹ "there is scarcely a church service where we can feel the Spirit of worship. Sometimes I give it up and go by myself and worship the Lord alone because the churches are too busy promoting people and things to cultivate the Presence of God";³⁷² "Apart from his position as a worshiper of God, man has no sure key to his own being . . .".³⁷³ Tozer defined worship in one article, and it was given here without his intervening comments:

Worship is 'to feel in your heart and express in some appropriate manner a humbling but delightful sense of admiring awe and astonished wonder and overpowering love in the presence of that most ancient Mystery, that unspeakable Majesty which philosophers call the First Cause but which we call Our Father Which Art in Heaven.'³⁷⁴

Worship, he said, is a natural desire in all human beings because they were created in the image of God, created spirit beings; and ". . . true worship is spiritual."³⁷⁵ Although men have the desire to worship,

³⁷⁰"Created to Worship," The Alliance Witness, Vol. 93 (June 18, 1958), p. 3.

³⁷¹Ibid., p. 13.

³⁷²Ibid.

³⁷³That Incredible Christian, op. cit., p. 125.

³⁷⁴"Created to Worship," loc. cit. The original definition was italicized by Tozer. In another article he listed four elements of worship, describing each one as a higher element: love, admiration, wonder, adoration. That Incredible Christian, op. cit., pp. 125-131.

³⁷⁵"A Sermon for Communion Sunday," The Alliance Weekly, Vol. 87 (September 3, 1952), pp. 567, 568.

Tozer noted, they are either not doing it, or are attempting to do it in the wrong way.³⁷⁶ In the new birth, God restores man the ability to worship.³⁷⁷ Tozer believed further that the filling with the Spirit raised worship for the regenerated man to higher levels, as was indicated in the next statements from two of his books:

The Holy Spirit is also a spiritual flame. He alone can raise our worship to true spiritual levels. . . . The faith of Christ undertakes to raise the soul to actual communion with God, to introduce into our religious experiences a supra-rational element as far above mere goodness as the heavens are above the earth. The coming of the Spirit brought to the Book of Acts this very quality of supramundane-ness, this mysterious elevation of tone not found in as high intensity even in the Gospels. The key of the Book of Acts is definitely the major. There is in it no trace of creature-sadness, no lingering disappointment, no quaver of uncertainty. The mood is heavenly. A victorious spirit is found there, a spirit which could never be the result of mere religious belief.³⁷⁸

.

If Bible Christianity is to survive the present world upheaval, we shall need to recapture the spirit of worship. We shall need to have a fresh revelation of the greatness of God and the beauty of Jesus. We shall need to put away our phobias and our prejudices against the deeper life and seek again to be filled with the Holy Spirit. He alone can raise our cold hearts to rapture and restore again the art of true worship.³⁷⁹

The Spirit of purity. Tozer's teaching about the Holy Spirit and the need of the Christian for holiness was discussed under the previous sections on Christ and cleansing, but several points were

³⁷⁶Ibid., p. 568; "Created to Worship," op. cit., pp. 4, 13.

³⁷⁷Ibid., p. 13.

³⁷⁸The Divine Conquest, op. cit., p. 100.

³⁷⁹That Incredible Christian, op. cit., p. 131.

reiterated here for the use of this section on the need for the Holy Spirit. Tozer plainly attributed the work of sanctification to the Holy Spirit, and indicated that He brings purity after regeneration. He said, "The new birth makes us partakers of the divine nature. There the work of undoing the dissimilarity between us and God begins. From there it progresses by the sanctifying operation of the Holy Spirit till God is satisfied."³⁸⁰ Speaking of the filling with the Spirit he said, ". . . He comes to bring purity for He is the Spirit of holiness."³⁸¹ Finally, to Tozer, the Christian and the Church were called to live such a pure spiritual and moral life that human ability was not enough, only Christ could do it. To be Christlike the Spirit of Christ was needed.³⁸²

The Spirit of gifts. Even if Tozer's sermon on "The Biblical Gift Functions of the HOLY SPIRIT: 'The Ability to Do!'" was the only one he preached on that subject, it was sufficient to prove that he believed the Church needed the Spirit for His gifts.³⁸³ The gifts, he said, are in the Church to get things done, and the Spirit works through the gifts and through gifted people. "Where these gifts are not present, or not recognized, or denied, the Church is thrown back upon other ways

³⁸⁰Born After Midnight, op. cit., p. 122.

³⁸¹The Tozer Pulpit, II, op. cit., p. 62.

³⁸²Ibid., p. 60. Cf. The Root of the Righteous, op. cit., pp. 82, 83, where Tozer links prayer, purity, and the Spirit.

³⁸³The Tozer Pulpit, II, op. cit., pp. 92-105.

of getting a work done."³⁸⁴ Tozer listed some of the substitutes for the Spirit's gifts as talent, psychology, business methods, political methods or "sales methods."³⁸⁵ The Spirit, he pointed out, is the life of the Body of Christ, and the teaching of His place in the Church is going to have to be restudied so that the Body can function again.³⁸⁶ "You cannot overstate the necessity for the Holy Ghost in the church, if you say it according to the Scriptures, for without the Spirit there can be nothing done for eternity," Tozer claimed.³⁸⁷ He described the works of God through some of the saints of former days and said, "Anything that God has ever done for a soul He will do for anyone else, if the conditions are met."³⁸⁸ How can the Spirit and the gifts be received? Tozer answered, "With our feet on the ground, and our head cool, but with our heart ablaze with the love of God, we walk out in this fullness of the Spirit if we will yield and obey. God wants to work through you!"³⁸⁹

The Holy Spirit provided. Tozer believed and taught that the Holy Spirit was needed by the individual and the Church, as the above material showed. He also believed and taught that being filled with

³⁸⁴Ibid., p. 97.

³⁸⁵Ibid., pp. 97-99.

³⁸⁶Ibid., pp. 93, 98.

³⁸⁷Ibid., p. 99.

³⁸⁸Ibid., pp. 100-105.

³⁸⁹Ibid., p. 105. Tozer's emphasis concerning the needs supplied by the Spirit was seen in a statement in a chapter in That Incredible Christian, titled "Why the Holy Spirit Is Given": "Gifts and power for service the Spirit surely desires to impart; but holiness and spiritual worship come first," p. 37.

the Holy Spirit was a present possibility, that the Holy Spirit was actually provided to meet the present need. In spite of what some Christians have said to deny the filling with the Spirit, Tozer stated, "I want here boldly to assert that it is my happy belief that every Christian can have a copious outpouring of the Holy Spirit in a measure far beyond that received at conversion, and I might also say, far beyond that enjoyed by the rank and file of orthodox believers today."³⁹⁰ It is important, he went on, to have such a belief, for "God will not surprise a doubting heart with an effusion of the Holy Spirit, nor will He fill anyone who has doctrinal questions about the possibility of being filled."³⁹¹ Tozer recommended a study of the Scriptures to cure doubts and to create expectancy. Willing to rest his case upon the New Testament, he said,

If a careful and humble examination of the words of Christ and His apostles does not lead to a belief that we may be filled with the Holy Spirit now, then I see no reason to look elsewhere. For it matters little what this or that religious teacher has said for or against the proposition. If the doctrine is not taught in the Scriptures then it cannot be supported by any argument, and all exhortations to be filled are valueless.³⁹²

In a sermon called "The Promised Filling of the HOLY SPIRIT: Instantly, Not Gradually!" Tozer stated that those who really mean to follow the Lord ". . . will be brought to the conclusion that it was His plan, and

³⁹⁰The Divine Conquest, op. cit., p. 121.

³⁹¹Ibid., pp. 121, 122. Cf. The Tozer Pulpit, II, op. cit., pp. 66, 67.

³⁹²The Divine Conquest, op. cit., p. 122. He said, "Let no one interpret the Scriptures for you in such a way as to rule out the Father's gift of the Spirit." Man: The Dwelling Place of God, op. cit., p. 41.

part of the purchase of the blood of Christ, that He should fill everyone who names the name of Jesus."³⁹³ "There isn't anything about the Spirit-filled life," he added, "that is abnormal, extra, strange or queer. Actually, it is the way that Christians are supposed to be!"³⁹⁴ This normal Spirit-filled life, Tozer believed, was to begin with a definite, conscious experience of being filled. The experience was for right now. That is, the Spirit was given instantaneously. He had found no one in the Bible, church history, or in biography who was filled with the Spirit gradually, who did not know he had been filled, or who did not know when he was filled.³⁹⁵ Tozer accused Satan of confusing and opposing, the doctrine of the Spirit-filled life, and surrounding it ". . . with false notions and fears."³⁹⁶ If the devil can get people to say they want a gradual filling, he will not have to worry, because that is a slow process, Tozer claimed. He answered this desire to be filled gradually, with these words:

You may say, 'Well, I am going to be filled gradually!'

I answer, my brother, that you are not. You are going to be filled as an act or you are not going to be filled--you can be sure of that!

We ought to be very plain in our teaching that Satan has blocked every effort of the Church of Christ to receive from the Father

³⁹³The Tozer Pulpit, II, op. cit., p. 66.

³⁹⁴Ibid.

³⁹⁵Ibid., p. 65; Man: The Dwelling Place of God, op. cit., p. 41. Cf. Paths to Power, op. cit., p. 38; That Incredible Christian, op. cit., p. 24.

³⁹⁶The Tozer Pulpit, II, op. cit., pp. 65, 66. Cf. "The Holy Spirit Is Here," The Alliance Weekly, Vol. 89 (June 23, 1954), p. 2.

her divine and blood-brought patrimony that the Holy Spirit should fill His Church and that He should fill individuals who make up His Church.³⁹⁷

Tozer took the need and the possibility of being filled with the Spirit seriously, for he said,

I have to tell the truth, and the truth is not very well received, even by the saints. The simple truth is that unless we have a lighting down upon evangelicalism, upon fundamentalism, upon our gospel churches, unless the dove of God can come down with His wings outspread and make Himself known and felt among us, that which is fundamentalism will be liberalism in years to come. And liberalism will be unitarianism.³⁹⁸

Summary

Tozer viewed the filling with the Spirit as the culmination of redemption, the full possession of the human heart by God. He believed that the world could not receive the Holy Spirit, but that the Christian needed Him in fulness, even though He was received in a measure in regeneration, and that the Spirit's fulness was provided for the Christian. He believed in the need for the Holy Spirit to fill individuals, Churches and denominations. Tozer taught that a comparison between first century Christians and the Christians of his day proved that modern Christians needed the Holy Spirit in fulness. He also pointed out five things for which Christians needed the Holy Spirit: truth, power, worship, purity and gifts. Finally, Tozer believed that the Holy Spirit had been provided to meet the need of the Christian and the Church. For those who doubted the possibility of being filled with the

³⁹⁷The Tozer Pulpit, II, op. cit., p. 66.

³⁹⁸Ibid., p. 141.

Holy Spirit, Tozer recommended a study of the Scriptures, for he himself rested his case upon the New Testament, and he believed that anyone who was serious about following the Lord would be brought to the conclusion that the Spirit's fulness was provided by God's plan and Christ's blood. He felt that believing in the instantaneous aspect of the filling with the Holy Spirit, and that He could be consciously received "now," were essential. The Spirit-filled life was to be the normal thing for Christians, according to Tozer. He took seriously the possibility and the need of the Holy Spirit for the Church, and he saw tragic results if the Spirit was not received by evangelicals.

For those who were serious about being filled with the Spirit, Tozer outlined the way in to the experience.

The Filling with the Holy Spirit: Preparation, Reception and Results

In dealing with people who wanted to know how to be filled with the Spirit Tozer said, "I have been afraid that my listeners might have gotten the idea somewhere that I had a how-to-be-filled-with-the-Spirit-in-five-easy-lessons doctrine, which I could give you."³⁹⁹ That is not true, he said, but there are some things that need to be settled before the Holy Spirit will come.⁴⁰⁰ These things which Tozer mentioned were discussed in the paragraphs below. There were hindrances to be removed and conditions to be met.

³⁹⁹How to be Filled with the Holy Spirit, op. cit., p. 18.

⁴⁰⁰Ibid.

Getting rid of sin. According to Tozer, the Holy Spirit will not fill the soul that is still dabbling in sin. "No one whose senses have been exercised to know good and evil but must grieve over the sight of zealous souls seeking to be filled with the Holy Spirit while they are yet living in a state of moral carelessness or borderline sin."⁴⁰¹ The person who wants to be filled with the Spirit should get rid of everything that is contradictory to the Scripture revealed character of God. "To seek high emotional states while living in sin," he declared, "is to throw our whole life open to self deception and the judgment of God."⁴⁰² Some of the sins of habit and act which Tozer saw as hindering the Holy Spirit from descending upon God's people were selfishness--living in wealth before a starving world--lust, spite, resentment, jealousy, envy, pride--of person, creed, possession, race, accomplishment--coldness toward God, and lack of love for the languishing church and a perishing world. These, he said, must be put away before the Holy Spirit will come.⁴⁰³

Getting rid of fear. Fear of emotion and fear of fanaticism were named by Tozer as additional hindrances to the pouring out of the Spirit. It is wrong, he said, to teach an opposition between faith and feeling, because it is against common sense, psychology and the Bible. Faith produces feeling, and though it is true that there can be feeling apart

⁴⁰¹The Divine Conquest, op. cit., p. 99. Cf. p. 100.

⁴⁰²Ibid., p. 100.

⁴⁰³The Tozer Pulpit, II, op. cit., pp. 142-146.

from faith, there can never be faith without feeling.⁴⁰⁴ Through the unwarranted excesses and foolish conduct of some who profess Pentecostal attainments many others have been frightened away from the Holy Spirit, and have placed all teaching about Him into the same class with the fanatics' representation of Him.⁴⁰⁵ "Such victims," advised Tozer, concerning those who were frightened away from the Spirit, "must be taught that the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Jesus, and is as gracious and beautiful as the Saviour Himself."⁴⁰⁶ Later he noted, "The Holy Spirit is the cure for fanaticism, not the cause of it."⁴⁰⁷ In still another place Tozer made this analysis, "One of the most telling blows which the enemy ever struck at the life of the Church was to create in her a fear of the Holy Spirit."⁴⁰⁸ Fear of the Holy Spirit and His work, Tozer taught, must be cured.

Acknowledging and repenting neglect. Tozer believed that God's people must acknowledge their failure to take advantage of their heritage, before His desperately needed outpouring would come.⁴⁰⁹ In

⁴⁰⁴Paths to Power, op. cit., pp. 35, 36.

⁴⁰⁵Ibid., p. 36; The Tozer Pulpit, II, op. cit., p. 58; The Divine Conquest, op. cit., pp. 98, 99.

⁴⁰⁶Paths to Power, op. cit., p. 36.

⁴⁰⁷Ibid. Tozer's italics.

⁴⁰⁸The Divine Conquest, op. cit., p. 98. Cf. The Tozer Pulpit, II, op. cit., p. 81; How to be Filled with the Holy Spirit, op. cit., p. 19.

⁴⁰⁹The Tozer Pulpit, II, op. cit., p. 59.

The Divine Conquest, Tozer made the following indictment against the Church for its sins against the Holy Spirit:

We have bitterly mistreated Him in the house of His friends. We have crucified Him in His own temple as they crucified the Eternal Son on the hill above Jerusalem. And the nails we used were not of iron, but of the finer and more precious stuff of which human life is made. Out of our hearts we took the refined metals of will and feeling and thought, and from them we fashioned the nails of suspicion and rebellion and neglect. By unworthy thoughts about Him and unfriendly attitudes toward Him we grieved and quenched Him days without end.⁴¹⁰

Repentance for this is necessary, he said, and the best repentance is to change the attitudes and acts, no longer neglecting the Spirit, and beginning ". . . to think of Him as One to be worshipped and obeyed."⁴¹¹

Preaching and believing. Two other hindrances to the reception of the Spirit's anointing were mentioned by Tozer. First, there was ". . . a hardness of heart caused by hearing men without the Spirit constantly preaching about the Spirit."⁴¹² Preaching the truth of the filling without having the power causes the hearers, who "sense the lack," to go away, not opposing the truth, but ". . . with numbed hearts" as ". . . an unconscious reaction from unreality."⁴¹³ Second, instructing seekers after the filling with the Spirit to "'take it by faith'" is damaging, Tozer said.⁴¹⁴ He acknowledged that faith was necessary, but that many seekers had a wrong conception of faith as

⁴¹⁰The Divine Conquest, op. cit., pp. 74, 75.

⁴¹¹Ibid., p. 75.

⁴¹²Paths to Power, op. cit., p. 37.

⁴¹³Ibid.

⁴¹⁴Ibid.

merely mental acceptance of a doctrine. Others do not want to go through "the painful struggle of death to the old life: and therefore receive the "'take it by faith' doctrine" as a welcome escape.⁴¹⁵ People who imbibe the false doctrine of faith show by their powerless lives, he stated, that they did not really receive the Spirit; they also slow down the Church and cause ". . . most of the trouble when things get tight."⁴¹⁶

Besides the previous hindrances which had to be removed, Tozer outlined various convictions which had to become personal before the seeking Christian could be filled with the Spirit. These were briefly discussed below.

Believe the filling is possible. Doctrinal questions about the filling, Tozer said, must be solved and the person thoroughly convinced that he can be filled with the Spirit, that it is God's will for him, and that the Spirit-filled life is not abnormal or peculiar.⁴¹⁷ To his own congregation he said, "Unless you are convinced of this, I recommend that you don't do anything yet. I would rather have you meditate on the Scriptures, read the Word, and see for yourselves what God the Lord has spoken."⁴¹⁸

⁴¹⁵Ibid., pp. 37, 38.

⁴¹⁶Ibid., p. 38.

⁴¹⁷The Tozer Pulpit, II, op. cit., pp. 66, 67; How to be Filled with the Holy Spirit, op. cit., pp. 18-20.

⁴¹⁸The Tozer Pulpit, II, op. cit., p. 67.

Have strong desire. Two other conditions to be met in preparing for the Spirit's filling, according to Tozer, were for the seeker to be sure that he wanted to be filled and to have an acute desire.⁴¹⁹ There must be a willingness to count the cost, a willingness to let the Holy Spirit take over the entire personality. He will expect "unquestioning obedience"; He will not tolerate the the "self-sins"--such as self-pity, self-love, self-defense and self-confidence--He will not allow boasting, He will test, discipline, and chasten, and He will take away "those borderline pleasures" enjoyed by other Christians.⁴²⁰ To be sure, the Spirit will enfold the Christian in His love; it is also true that He is pure, gentle, sane, and wise, and has a healing balm to dispense; but, said Tozer, He will be Lord.⁴²¹ "Now, with the conditions before you, do you still want to be filled with the Holy Spirit?" he asked.⁴²² He asked this searching question because he felt that many wanted the benefits of the Spirit but not the Spirit.⁴²³ A second hindrance to being filled is complacency. Some hold the view that strong desire is a proof of unbelief; but, Tozer wrote, before anyone can be filled with the Spirit his desire must become consuming.⁴²⁴ He warned, "If there is

⁴¹⁹Ibid., pp. 67-71; The Divine Conquest, op. cit., pp. 122-124; How to be Filled with the Holy Spirit, op. cit., pp. 20-22.

⁴²⁰The Divine Conquest, op. cit., pp. 122, 123.

⁴²¹Ibid., p. 123; How to be Filled with the Holy Spirit, op. cit., p. 21.

⁴²²The Divine Conquest, op. cit., p. 124.

⁴²³How to be Filled with the Holy Spirit, op. cit., p. 22.

⁴²⁴The Divine Conquest, loc. cit.

anything in your life bigger than your desire to be a Spirit-filled Christian, you will never be a Spirit-filled Christian until that is cured."⁴²⁵

Be sure of the need. Tozer told the seeker he not only had to have a strong desire, but needed to see the need to be filled:

Can't you get along the way you are? You have been doing fairly well: You pray, you read your Bible, you give to missions, you enjoy singing hymns, you thank God you don't drink or gamble or attend theaters, that you are honest, that you have prayer at home. You are glad about all this. Can't you get along like that? Are you sure you need any more than that?⁴²⁶

Those who felt their need of having a better Christian life, Tozer invited to seek God:

But maybe you feel in your heart that you just can't go on as you are, that the level of spirituality to which you know yourself called is way beyond you. If you feel that there is something that you must have or your heart will never be satisfied, that there are levels of spirituality, mystic deeps and heights of spiritual communion, purity and power that you have never known, that there is fruit which you know you should bear and do not, victory which you know you should have and have not--I would say, 'Come on,' because God has something for you tonight.⁴²⁷

Crucifixion. Having seen the possibility of being filled with the Spirit, having desired it until the desire became unquenchable, and having really seen the need to be filled, the seeker still needs

⁴²⁵The Tozer Pulpit, II, op. cit., p. 72.

⁴²⁶How to be Filled with the Holy Spirit, loc. cit. Cf. The Tozer Pulpit, II, op. cit., pp. 71, 72.

⁴²⁷How to be Filled with the Holy Spirit, op. cit., pp. 22, 23. Cf. The Tozer Pulpit, II, loc. cit.

to go through a crucifixion, Tozer said.⁴²⁸ He doubted whether anyone had ever received the anointing with the Spirit who had not first gone through ". . . a period of deep anxiety and inward agitation."⁴²⁹ The Christian must go through a stripping experience that destroys confidence in self and life and throws him upon the Comforter for help.⁴³⁰ There is no merit, Tozer pointed out, in the Christian going through this experience. It does not earn the filling, nor make the person "dear to God," but "It serves to empty our earthly vessels and prepare us for the inpouring of the Holy Spirit."⁴³¹ Tozer added in one sermon, in which he talked about the emptying that was essential to the filling, these words:

Brethren, is this too rough? Am I demanding too much? I don't think so, for I am probably chilly compared to what I ought to be. I am nowhere nearly as demanding as Finney or John Wesley or many of the great preachers whose appeals God blessed and honored.⁴³²

Receiving the Spirit. The conditions to be met, Tozer said, are part of the answer to the question of how to be filled with the Holy Spirit.⁴³³ Next, he gave four Scripture passages on how to receive

⁴²⁸Ibid., pp. 72-75; The Divine Conquest, op. cit., pp. 124, 125. The subject of crucifixion was dealt with in detail in an earlier section of the study. Supra, pp. 76-86.

⁴²⁹The Divine Conquest, op. cit., p. 124. Tozer's italics.

⁴³⁰Ibid., pp. 125, 126.

⁴³¹Ibid., p. 126. Cf. The Tozer Pulpit, II, op. cit., pp. 72-75; That Incredible Christian, op. cit., p. 66.

⁴³²The Tozer Pulpit, II, op. cit., p. 75.

⁴³³Ibid. Cf. How to be Filled with the Holy Spirit, op. cit., pp. 23, 24.

the Spirit after the first conditions are met, saying, ". . . an archangel from heaven could not do better than to give the Scripture to you and say, 'Believe the Word of God!'"⁴³⁴ The first one, Romans 12:1-2, tells the Christian to present his vessel.⁴³⁵ The presenting includes the personality, spirit, ambitions, mind, love, all. It is simple and easy, but there must be a willingness to do it. The Spirit cannot fill a vessel that has not been presented.⁴³⁶ The second step, Tozer taught, was to ask. He said he set aside the theological objections to Luke 11:9-11, because why did God put it in the Bible if He did not want it seen and believed? People all around the world, he noted, have believed God's offer, have asked and have received the filling.⁴³⁷ The third text was Acts 5:32. The Spirit of God will only bless an obedient child, and obedience means, he said, "Simply to live by the Scriptures as you understand them--simple, but revolutionary."⁴³⁸ The seeking Christian must obey the Word, the Spirit, and "the Risen Lord," to do what he is asked to do, and then God will bestow His Spirit.⁴³⁹ The last thing Tozer said to do was to have faith, Galatians 3:2. The Christian was initially saved by faith in Christ, and he is

⁴³⁴The Tozer Pulpit, II, loc. cit.

⁴³⁵Ibid. Cf. How to be Filled with the Holy Spirit, op. cit., p. 23.

⁴³⁶Ibid. Cf. The Tozer Pulpit, II, loc. cit.

⁴³⁷Ibid., p. 76.

⁴³⁸Ibid., p. 77.

⁴³⁹Ibid.

not filled with the Spirit by keeping the law.⁴⁴⁰ When he first believed, he received a measure of the Spirit, but the filling with the Spirit is ". . . His coming and possessing the full body and mind and life and heart, taking the whole personality over, gently, but directly and bluntly, and making it His, so that we may become a habitation of God in the Spirit."⁴⁴¹

Tozer believed that the Christian and the Church needed the Holy Spirit in His fullness, and that in order to be filled with the Spirit there had to be a recognition of the need, a desire to be filled, and a consecrating, asking, obeying, and believing. He addressed the seeker in this way, at the close of one sermon:

Are you willing to stop quenching the Spirit?

Are you willing to stop resisting the Spirit?

He only asks that you throw up your hands in surrender and say, 'I believe Deity is present.' Breathe in the Holy Ghost, and let Him come and fill your life.

That is it! Perhaps it does not sound as dramatic and colorful as you have been taught that things ought to be, but here we have it. The Holy Ghost came, and He is still here. All He wants is for us to yield, obey, open our hearts, and He rushes in and our lives are transformed and changed!⁴⁴²

Results of the filling with the Holy Spirit. The person who seeks and meets the conditions will be filled with the Holy Spirit, so Tozer believed and taught. What, however, are the results of that

⁴⁴⁰ Ibid.; How to be Filled with the Holy Spirit, loc. cit.

⁴⁴¹ Ibid., pp. 23, 24.

⁴⁴² The Tozer Pulpit, II, op. cit., p. 63.

experience, someone may ask? One of the immediate effects was the witness of the Spirit to the individual that he had indeed been filled with the Holy Spirit. Tozer believed that there were workings of God in the human soul unknown to the person himself, but, he said, ". . . there are two acts of God within the life of the seeking man that are never done without his knowledge. One is the miracle of the new birth and the other is the anointing of the Holy Spirit."⁴⁴³ It is wrong psychologically and scripturally to equate the witness of the Spirit with any emotional, psychological, or physical phenomena, such as speaking in tongues, increased joy, or more effectiveness in service. These are not the Spirit's witness.⁴⁴⁴ God's work in the redeemed man's heart always has results in conduct; but, Tozer wrote,

The witness of the Spirit is a sacred inner thing which cannot be explained. It is altogether personal and cannot be passed from one to another. . . . The Spirit whispers its mysterious Presence to the heart, and the heart knows without knowing how it knows. Just as we know we are alive by unmediated knowledge and without recourse to proof, so we know we are alive in the Holy Ghost. Our knowledge is by immediate cognition altogether independent of inference and without the support of reason. The witness is in the hidden regions of the spirit, too deep for proof, where external evidence is invalid and 'signs' are of no use.⁴⁴⁵

Tozer did imply, however, that the "mighty, world-changing deeds" of men like Bernard, Frederick Faber, Augustine, Thomas 'a Kempis, Livingstone, George Mueller, Charles Finney, and Charles Spurgeon were

⁴⁴³"The Witness of the Spirit: What is it?" The Alliance Weekly, Vol. 89 (February 17, 1954), p. 2.

⁴⁴⁴Ibid.

⁴⁴⁵Ibid. Tozer's italics.

evidence that men could be filled with the Spirit without speaking in tongues, because they did not say they spoke in tongues, yet did these works.⁴⁴⁶ But what about those who believe that speaking in tongues is the evidence of being filled? Tozer answered,

. . . I have known and studied these dear brethren, and I have preached to them for a long, long time. I have studied them, and I know them very well, and I am very sympathetic with them. There are some churches that are very sane and very beautiful and godly. I don't want to hurt anyone's feelings, but it is true that, as Christians, we have to smile and thank God for the truth, whether it hurts or not. The movement itself has magnified one single gift above all others, and that one gift is the one Paul said was the least. An unscriptural exhibition of that gift results, and there is a tendency to place personal feeling above the Scriptures, and we must never, never do that!

God has given us the Book, brother, and the Book comes first. If it can't be shown in the Book, then I don't want anyone coming to me all aquiver and trying to tell me anything. The Book--you must give me the Word!⁴⁴⁷

The Holy Spirit was given, Tozer claimed, not primarily for giving gifts, such as tongues, nor for "'power for service'" (which he said was "the least of several effects"); ". . . holiness and spiritual worship come first," he insisted.⁴⁴⁸ Other effects of the filling with the Spirit were seen in Tozer's listing of seven things that were different about the disciples after Pentecost, quoted here in part: "the sudden, brilliant consciousness of the actual presence of the living God"; "the joy of the Holy Ghost"; "the striking power of their words to penetrate and arrest"; "the clear sense of the reality of all

⁴⁴⁶The Tozer Pulpit, II, op. cit., p. 104.

⁴⁴⁷Ibid., p. 99.

⁴⁴⁸That Incredible Christian, op. cit., pp. 35-37.

things"; "a sharp separation between the believer and the world"; "a great delight in prayer and communion with God"; and "the manner in which they loved the Scriptures of God."⁴⁴⁹ From the previous discussions of the study, additional results of the filling with the Spirit, according to Tozer, were noted: purity, the illumination of truth, raising of the quality of worship, and power, or the ability to do.⁴⁵⁰ He also believed that the filling with the Spirit restored man's emotions to their rightful place and use. "The Christian stoic," he said, "who has crushed his feelings is only two-thirds of a man; an important third part has been repudiated."⁴⁵¹

Tozer believed that the filling with the Spirit resulted in some immediate blessings and evidences, and had some long-reaching effects. He saw the "divine conquest" as both a negative work and a positive work. Of the conquest he said,

This God accomplishes by an effective seizing upon, a sharp but love-impelled invasion of our natures. When He has overpowered our resistance He binds us with cords of love and draws us to Himself. There, 'faint with His loveliness' we lie conquered and thank God again and again for the blessed conquest. There, with moral sanity restored, we lift up our eyes and bless the Most High God. Then we go forth in faith to apprehend that for which we were first apprehended of God.⁴⁵²

He saw the filling with the Spirit as the full return of God to His dwelling place in man, and an important event in man's "pursuit of God."⁴⁵³

⁴⁴⁹The Tozer Pulpit, II, op. cit., pp. 125-131.

⁴⁵⁰Supra, pp. 127-136.

⁴⁵¹The Divine Conquest, op. cit., pp. 106-109.

⁴⁵²Ibid., p. 63. ⁴⁵³Supra, Chapters III and IV.

Summary

Tozer believed that there was a necessary preparation for and a receiving of the filling with the Holy Spirit, and that there were certain results from being filled with the Spirit. The preparation for Spirit-filling consisted of various hindrances to be removed and conditions to be met. The Christian, he believed, had to put away all known sin, and had to overcome fear of emotion, of fanaticism and of the Holy Spirit. The Christian and the Church, he taught, needed to acknowledge their failure to take advantage of the inheritance of the Holy Spirit and needed to repent of their suspicion, rebellion and neglect of Him before He would come to fill. Besides putting away and changing some things, the Christian had to meet some conditions before the Spirit could be received in fulness. These conditions were as follows: believing beyond doubt in the possibility of being filled with the Spirit, being sure that he wanted to be filled with One who would be Lord over all, having a consuming desire to be filled, being sure he needed the Spirit, and going through a stripping process which served to destroy confidence in self and life, threw him upon the Comforter for help, and emptied the vessel of his life to make way for the filling with the Holy Spirit. To receive the Holy Spirit Tozer believed that the Christian finally needed to do the following: to present his vessel, to ask God to fill him, to obey God, and to believe God. Lastly, Tozer believed that when the Spirit came in His fullness there were certain results. There was a direct inner witness of the Spirit that the filling had taken place, which was separate from any emotional, psychological, or physical phenomena. Seven results of the

filling with the Spirit were listed by Tozer in an analysis of the difference in the disciples after Pentecost. Purity and the restoration of the emotions to their rightful place were additional results. Tozer saw the filling with the Spirit as the full restoration of God to the whole heart of man, and as a crucial event in the Christian's pursuit of God.

Nevertheless, God and man had not come to a perfection of relationship that ended all growth or further perfecting. Tozer, in his concluding statements of The Divine Conquest, said,

However wonderful the crisis-experience of being filled with the Spirit, we should remember that it is only a means toward something greater: that greater thing is the life-long walk in the Spirit, indwelt, directed, taught and empowered by His mighty Person. And to continue thus to walk in the Spirit requires that we meet certain conditions. These are laid down for us in the sacred Scriptures and are there for all to see.⁴⁵⁴

This walk in the Spirit was discussed in the final section of the presentation of Tozer's doctrine, "'The Pursuit of God' Continued."

III. "THE PURSUIT OF GOD" CONTINUED

Tozer was quoted previously as saying that the regenerated soul's relationship to God was one of an ever-expanding knowledge and experience, that regeneration was not the end, but the beginning of a pursuit without a known end, because of the infinite character of God. Tozer did not believe that the experience of being filled with the Spirit ended the pursuit either, but was a means to the greater

⁴⁵⁴The Divine Conquest, op. cit., p. 127.

experience of walking in the Spirit for the rest of life. The pursuit of the Godhead began with regeneration, received a new thrust in the filling with the Spirit, and continued throughout life.

Tozer covered a wide variety of subjects in instructing Christians about their pursuit of the knowledge of God. Sometimes what he said was addressed to new-born Christians, sometimes only to Christians seeking the experience of the filling with the Spirit, and sometimes just to mature, Spirit-filled Christians; but much of what he said was for all classes of Christians. Occasionally, it was difficult to tell whether he was addressing a particular class of Christians or all Christians. Because this study was concerned especially with Tozer's doctrine of holiness, all of the material in this third section was directed toward showing Tozer's view of the Spirit-filled life, and may or may not have been relevant to Christians at other spiritual levels. The main points were grouped under the following headings: "Life After Death" and "Characteristics of a Saint."

Life After Death

The crucifixion of the Christian which Tozer described was the way that led to life, life in the Spirit, a life of purity, love, power, truth, worship, and usefulness.⁴⁵⁵ An essential part of the Spirit-filled life as he saw it, however, was the necessity of maintaining the new-life with its priceless virtues and blessings and the necessity of making further spiritual advances. Tozer criticized those who put

⁴⁵⁵The Divine Conquest, op. cit., pp. 61, 127.

all of salvation into one or two experiences, saying, "They ignore the sanctifying effects of suffering, cross carrying and practical obedience. They pass by the need for spiritual training, the necessity of forming right religious habits, and the need to wrestle against the world, the devil and the flesh."⁴⁵⁶ For walking in the Spirit and increasing in the knowledge of God, Tozer laid down conditions to be met and things to be remembered.

The character of faith. Tozer instructed Christians that faith in God must be a continuous act. He defined faith itself as ". . . not a once-done act, but a continuous gaze of the heart at the Triune God."⁴⁵⁷ "It is lifting the mind to 'behold the Lamb of God,' and never ceasing the beholding for the rest of our lives."⁴⁵⁸ This may be difficult, he said, but once the Christian has committed himself to gaze on Christ forever, "God takes this intention for our choice and makes what allowances He must for the thousand distractions which beset us in this evil world," and the Christian can be comforted that a habit, which will become a "sort of spiritual reflex," is forming.⁴⁵⁹

The means of grace. Although Tozer felt that keeping the gaze of the heart fixed upon God would lift the spiritual plane of the Christian's life, he did not forget the importance of the "ordinary

⁴⁵⁶That Incredible Christian, op. cit., p. 25.

⁴⁵⁷The Pursuit of God, op. cit., p. 90.

⁴⁵⁸Ibid.

⁴⁵⁹Ibid., pp. 90, 91.

means of grace," such as the Bible, prayer, and public worship. Walking in the Spirit, he wrote, demands that the Christian "live in the Word of God as a fish lives in the sea," not just studying the Bible, nor taking a Bible doctrine course, but meditating in it day and night, loving it, feasting upon it, digesting it.⁴⁶⁰ "When the business of life compels our attention we may yet, by a kind of blessed mental reflex, keep the Word of Truth ever before our minds."⁴⁶¹ Prayer is important, he noted, for making spiritual progress and avoiding serious error.⁴⁶² Summing up, he said, "Long periods of Bible meditation will purify our gaze and direct it; church attendance will enlarge our outlook and increase our love for others. Service and work and activity; all are good and should be engaged in by every Christian."⁴⁶³

Time and purpose. Tozer singled out two further principles as necessary for increasing in personal knowledge of God: giving God time and determining to know Him better regardless of opposition. The greatest need of man, he said, is to experience God Himself, and "To enjoy this growing knowledge of God will require that we go beyond the goals so casually set by modern evangelicals. We must fix our hearts on God and purposefully aim to rise above the dead level and average

⁴⁶⁰The Divine Conquest, op. cit., p. 127.

⁴⁶¹Ibid.

⁴⁶²Man: The Dwelling Place of God, op. cit., p. 41; That Incredible Christian, op. cit., pp. 50, 51; The Root of the Righteous, op. cit., p. 106.

⁴⁶³The Pursuit of God, op. cit., p. 96.

of current Christianity."⁴⁶⁴ In doing this, he warned, Satan will accuse the Christian of "spiritual pride" and friends will caution against being "'holier than thou'," but to capture higher spiritual levels the Christian must go against ". . . the sour and violent protests of the devil."⁴⁶⁵ Then, God must be given time in order for spiritual progress to take place. It may be, Tozer reasoned, that the major cause of retarded spiritual growth is ". . . failure to give time to the cultivation of the knowledge of God."⁴⁶⁶ To grow in the knowledge of God in personal experience requires the devotion of the whole life.⁴⁶⁷

Recognizing imperfections. In cultivating God's friendship, Tozer said, there must also be a recognition of human imperfections, because God can only give some of His attributes to man. Intellect, holiness, love, faithfulness, pity, in these things man can have likeness to God, but he cannot share God's sovereignty, eternity, self-existence, or infinity. Tozer said,

God, being perfect, has capacity for perfect friendship. Man being imperfect, can never quite know perfection in anything, least of all in his relation to the incomprehensible Godhead. Perfection lies on God's side, but on man's side there are weakness of purpose, lack of desire, small faith and numerous other impediments. These

⁴⁶⁴That Incredible Christian, op. cit., pp. 83, 85.

⁴⁶⁵Ibid., p. 85.

⁴⁶⁶The Root of the Righteous, op. cit., pp. 10, 11. Tozer's italics.

⁴⁶⁷Ibid., pp. 11, 12. Cf. That Incredible Christian, op. cit., pp. 135-137.

make for a friendship which, though it is the most wonderfilled experience possible to man, is yet short of the completeness we would enjoy if these impediments were removed or even reduced appreciably.⁴⁶⁸

Although these imperfections must be admitted, he said, the Christian does not need to despair. In spite of frailties there can be growth in grace and a progressive moving toward ". . . a more perfect experiential union with God."⁴⁶⁹ The means for making progress are ". . . firm self-discipline, quick obedience, unceasing prayer, utter detachment from the world and the exercise of robust faith in the truths revealed in the Holy Scriptures."⁴⁷⁰

Temptation. The Christian pursuing God, besides having to recognize and deal with his imperfections, has to deal with temptation. He wrote, "We sometimes leave the impression that it is possible to find at an altar of prayer, once and for all, purity of heart and power to assure victorious living for the rest of our days. How wrong this notion is has been proved by countless numbers of Christians through the centuries."⁴⁷¹ However revolutionary a spiritual experience is, it can no more exempt the Christian from temptation than "modern farm machinery," "improved agricultural methods," "well prepared soil," "well kept fences," and "carefully painted" buildings can keep the farm from degenerating through neglect.⁴⁷² The law of nature is to return to

⁴⁶⁸Ibid., p. 120.

⁴⁶⁹Ibid. ⁴⁷⁰Ibid.

⁴⁷¹The Root of the Righteous, op. cit., p. 101.

⁴⁷²Ibid., pp. 100, 101.

the wild, and since the Christian's pure heart is "obnoxious to the devil and to all the forces of the lost world,"

they will not rest until they have won back what they have lost. The jungle will creep in and seek to swallow up the tiny areas that have been made free by the power of the Holy Ghost. Only watchfulness and constant prayer can preserve those moral gains won for us through the operations of God's grace.⁴⁷³

Yet, Tozer wrote, "To be tempted and yet to glorify God in the midst of it is to honor Him where it counts. This is more pleasing to God than any amount of sheltered and untempted piety could ever be. To fight and to win in the name of Christ is always better than to have known no conflict."⁴⁷⁴ Tozer believed that temptation was a fact of life, even the Spirit-filled life.

Spiritual dryness and staleness. Two more facts to be reckoned with in the Christian's life, according to Tozer, are the times when the spiritual life is either dry or stale. The "dry spells" which come to the Christian unpredicted and unexplained, ". . . no matter how faithfully he tries to obey God and walk in the light," probably bother him more than anything else.⁴⁷⁵ Tozer told the Christian to be comforted by the fact that he is not alone in experiencing emotional deserts, for some of the holiest and sweetest saints have experienced them, too. A time of faded joy and feeble feeling, or no feeling, of the Lord's presence is necessary for the exercise of faith, so that the Christian learns to trust in God's character instead of his particular

⁴⁷³Ibid., pp. 101, 102.

⁴⁷⁴Ibid., p. 118.

⁴⁷⁵Ibid., p. 126.

delights.⁴⁷⁶ Times of staleness also come, but are not inevitable, though they are common, said Tozer. "He is a rare Christian who has not experienced times of spiritual dullness when the relish has gone out of his heart and the enjoyment of living has diminished greatly or departed altogether."⁴⁷⁷ Some of the causes are unconfessed sin, permitting "worldly interests" to grow in the heart, physical imperfections and weaknesses, fatigue, and monotony from doing and thinking the same things without a break, even spiritual things.⁴⁷⁸ What should be done about dryness, or staleness in the Christian life? If either one, Tozer answered, is caused by evil, then there must be repentance. If, however, after honestly examining the heart, no evil is found, the Christian does himself no good, gives no honor to God and plays into Satan's hands by continuing to assume that he has sinned.⁴⁷⁹ "There comes a time when the most spiritual thing we can do is to accept cleansing from all sin as an accomplished fact and stop calling that unclean which God has called clean."⁴⁸⁰ Sin not being the cause of dryness, the Christian should realize that he can walk by faith, without feeling.⁴⁸¹ The way to keep from getting stale, Tozer instructed, is

⁴⁷⁶Ibid., pp. 126-128.

⁴⁷⁷That Incredible Christian, op. cit., p. 107.

⁴⁷⁸Ibid., pp. 107-109.

⁴⁷⁹Ibid., p. 107; The Root of the Righteous, op. cit., p. 127.

⁴⁸⁰That Incredible Christian, loc. cit.

⁴⁸¹The Root of the Righteous, loc. cit.

". . . by getting proper rest, by practicing complete candor in prayer, by introducing variety into our lives, by heeding God's call to move onward and by exercising quiet faith always."⁴⁸²

The necessity of choices. Then too, the Christian must realize, Tozer said, that love for Christ is not demonstrated finally by zeal, "willingness to sacrifice," nor "sweet emotions," but by obedience.⁴⁸³ If the Christian lived in a Utopia he would count on the "new life" in him ". . . to do the will of God without effort and more or less unconsciously."⁴⁸⁴ "Unfortunately," Tozer wrote, "we have opposing us the lusts of the flesh, the attractions of the world and the temptations of the devil. These complicate our lives and require us often to make determined moral decisions on the side of Christ and His commandments."⁴⁸⁵ In fact, he continued, "the Christian cannot be certain of the reality and depth of his love until he comes face to face with the commandments of Christ and is forced to decide what to do about them."⁴⁸⁶

Spiritual mood. Another facet of the Christian's life, according to Tozer, was the "Importance of the Devotional Mood."⁴⁸⁷ "Holiness and power," he said, "are not qualities that can be once received and

⁴⁸²That Incredible Christian, op. cit., p. 109.

⁴⁸³Ibid., p. 134.

⁴⁸⁴Ibid., p. 133.

⁴⁸⁵Ibid.

⁴⁸⁶Ibid., p. 134.

⁴⁸⁷"Importance of the Devotional Mood," The Alliance Witness, Vol. 94 (September 23, 1959), p. 2.

thereafter forgotten as one might wind a clock or take a vitamin pill."⁴⁸⁸ The world, the devil and the flesh must be fought to conserve the gains which have been made. The devotional mood Tozer defined as ". . . nothing else than constant awareness of God's enfolding presence, the holding of inward conversations with Christ and private worship of God in spirit and in truth."⁴⁸⁹ Among the hindrances to this mood, he said, are distractions. Some distractions are inevitable and can be rendered nearly harmless by learning to be still inwardly. The Christian, however, cannot expect success in the spiritual life, if he deliberately opens himself to unnecessary distractions by a "roving imagination," "preoccupation with external affairs beyond what is absolutely necessary," and "multiplying of artificial objects of attention. . . ."⁴⁹⁰ Conquer distractions, Tozer advised, or be conquered. He concluded, "So let us cultivate simplicity; let us want fewer things; let us walk in the Spirit; let us fill our minds with the Word of God and our hearts with praise."⁴⁹¹ These things, he said, will establish the heart in "the devotional mood."⁴⁹²

The fellowship of the Spirit. Finally, Tozer emphasized the possibility of an increasingly intimate knowledge of the One who filled the surrendered Christian, the Holy Spirit Himself. One of his sermons, "The Holy Fellowship of the HOLY SPIRIT: It Must Be Cultivated!," was

⁴⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁹¹ Ibid.

⁴⁹² Ibid.

directed toward all Christians.⁴⁹³ First, he gave admonitions to those who he said were not ready to hear a sermon on getting better acquainted with the Holy Spirit, because they were not ready to die, to give up all in order to know the Holy Spirit intimately.⁴⁹⁴ Then, to those who were hungry to know His friendship, whether they were seeking to be filled or had already been filled with the Spirit, he gave seven pointers. (1) The first pointer was that ". . . the Holy Spirit is a living Person, and He can be known in an increasing degree of intimacy. Since He is a personality, He can never be fully known in a single encounter."⁴⁹⁵ Thinking that in the new birth the Christian knows all he can about God is a great mistake, Tozer said. "Similarly, those of us who believe in being filled with the Holy Ghost after conversion also make a mistake in thinking that we know all there is to know about the Holy Spirit."⁴⁹⁶ He continued,

Oh, my friend, we are just beginning. God's personality is so infinitely rich and manifold that it will take a thousand years of close search and intimate communion to know even the outer edges of the glorious nature of God. When we talk about communion with God and fellowship with the Holy Spirit, we are talking about that which begins now but will grow and increase and mature while life lasts.⁴⁹⁷

Since the Holy Spirit is a Person, there can be a communicating back and forth, the Christian whispering to Him and He whispering to the

⁴⁹³The Tozer Pulpit, II, op. cit., p. 106. Cf. How to be Filled with the Holy Spirit, op. cit., pp. 25-30.

⁴⁹⁴The Tozer Pulpit, II, op. cit., pp. 107-111.

⁴⁹⁵Ibid., p. 111.

⁴⁹⁶Ibid.

⁴⁹⁷Ibid., pp. 111, 112.

Christian through the Bible, or a hymn.⁴⁹⁸ (2) The second point was
 "... Be engrossed with Jesus Christ."⁴⁹⁹ The Holy Spirit takes the
 things of Christ and shows them to the Christian, therefore, the Holy
 Spirit will be known more intimately as more is made of Jesus Christ.⁵⁰⁰
 (3) Third, and similar to point two, "... honor Christ and the Holy
 Ghost will honor you," Tozer advised.⁵⁰¹ Call Jesus Lord, and believe
 that He is; call Him Christ, and believe that He is. Honor Him by
 witness, by obedience and by fellowship. When Jesus is being honored
 "... the Spirit of God becomes glad within us. He ceases to hold
 back, He communes with us and imparts Himself, and the sun comes up and
 heaven comes near as Jesus Christ becomes our All in all."⁵⁰² (4) The
 next pointer was "... We must walk in righteousness if we are to know
 the Holy Spirit in increasing intimacy."⁵⁰³ There can be no fellowship
 between the Holy Spirit and someone walking in unholiness.⁵⁰⁴ (5)
 Again, Tozer said to "... Make your thoughts a clean sanctuary."⁵⁰⁵
 Habitually malicious, proud, evil, and deceptive thoughts mean that a
 person is "... habitually without the communion of the Holy Ghost!"⁵⁰⁶

⁴⁹⁸Ibid., p. 112.

⁴⁹⁹Ibid.

⁵⁰⁰Ibid., p. 113.

⁵⁰¹Ibid. Cf. The Divine Conquest, op. cit., p. 127.

⁵⁰²The Tozer Pulpit, II, loc. cit.

⁵⁰³Ibid.

⁵⁰⁴Ibid., pp. 113-115.

⁵⁰⁵Ibid., p. 115. Cf. The Divine Conquest, loc. cit.

⁵⁰⁶The Tozer Pulpit, II, loc. cit.

To know the Spirit increasingly the Christian must have control over his thoughts, and should have thoughts of mercy, kindness, pity, charity, thoughts of God and Christ.⁵⁰⁷ (6) The sixth pointer for a growing, intimate fellowship with the Holy Spirit was to read the Bible much and often, brooding and thinking over it, and meditating on it night and day. Tozer challenged people to prayerfully, reverently, and quietly meditate on the Word for a month, putting away answers and questions and filling in of blanks in the portions which had not been understood.⁵⁰⁸ Get on both knees with the Bible and say in faith, "'Father, here I am. Begin to teach me!'"⁵⁰⁹ Tozer had no sympathy for Christians who neglected the Word, or ignored it, or got revelations apart from it.⁵¹⁰ (7) The last instruction of Tozer for knowing the Spirit in closer friendship was ". . . to cultivate the art of recognizing the presence of the Spirit everywhere, all of the time."⁵¹¹ The Holy Spirit is everywhere, and the interested Christian will find Him where He is, for His Presence is all about him.⁵¹² Cultivating the Spirit's acquaintance, Tozer said, is something to be done, a job, but it is delightful and easy.⁵¹³

⁵⁰⁷ Ibid., p. 116.

⁵⁰⁸ Ibid., pp. 116, 117.

⁵⁰⁹ Ibid., p. 117.

⁵¹⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹¹ Ibid., p. 118.

⁵¹² Ibid.

⁵¹³ Ibid.

Characteristics of a Saint

The closing section of the study describing Tozer's doctrine of holiness presented his strong conviction that the Church needed to produce saints, and noted that his description of a saint fit in with his doctrine of the Spirit-filled life. Analyzing the Christianity around him he said on one occasion, "We have measured ourselves by ourselves until the incentive to seek higher plateaus in the things of the Spirit is all but gone. . . . The fact is that we are not producing saints."⁵¹⁴ He continued,

The average so-called Bible Christian in our times is but a wretched parody on true sainthood. . . .

Clearly we must begin to produce better Christians. We must insist on New Testament sainthood for our converts, nothing less; and we must lead them into a state of heart purity, fiery love, separation from the world and poured-out devotion to the Person of Christ. Only in this way can the low level of spirituality be raised again to where it should be in the light of the Scriptures and of eternal values.⁵¹⁵

Because of his insistence on the need for saints, and in view of his doctrine of holiness which was the subject of this study, it was thought helpful to list some of the things which Tozer felt characterized a saint.

Tozer noted the following characteristics of the saint: (1) he desires to be holy instead of happy; (2) he wants to see God's honor advanced through himself even if he has to suffer "temporary dishonor or loss"; (3) he "wants to carry his cross"; (4) he sees everything from

⁵¹⁴Of God and Men, op. cit., pp. 12, 13.

⁵¹⁵Ibid., p. 13.

the viewpoint of God; (5) he would rather "die right" than "live wrong"; (6) he wants to see other people "advance at his expense"; (7) he habitually judges things by eternity instead of time;⁵¹⁶ (8) he sometimes ". . . may literally dwell in a state of spiritual fervor amounting to a mild and pure inebriation";⁵¹⁷ (9) he is a "perpetual miracle" not at all understood by the world;⁵¹⁸ (10) he is not haughty; (11) he is not holier-than-thou; (12) he likely feels he is the least of men; (13) he is not a recluse, but is sympathetic with the fallen, "sin-bruised," and brokenhearted; (14) but he "must walk alone";⁵¹⁹ (15) he suffers injustice, but never complains;⁵²⁰ (16) he has love for Christ that is so deep that ". . . the whole being goes out in a pained adoration of His person, an adoration that disturbs and disconcerts while it purges and satisfies and relaxes the deep inner heart";⁵²¹ (17) and he has sanctified judgment, or as Tozer put it, ". . . calm steady judgment and salty good sense."⁵²² Of the Spirit-filled life, Tozer said, it

⁵¹⁶That Incredible Christian, op. cit., pp. 110-112.

⁵¹⁷Of God and Men, op. cit., p. 9.

⁵¹⁸The Tozer Pulpit, II, op. cit., p. 35.

⁵¹⁹Man: The Dwelling Place of God, op. cit., pp. 168-174.

⁵²⁰"Symptomatic Words: 'Fair,' and 'Unfair'," The Alliance Weekly, Vol. 89 (May 19, 1954), p. 2.

⁵²¹That Incredible Christian, op. cit., p. 130.

⁵²²The Root of the Righteous, op. cit., pp. 151, 152.

. . . is not a special de luxe edition of Christianity to be enjoyed by a certain rare and privileged few who happen to be made of finer and more sensitive stuff than the rest. Rather, it is the normal state for every redeemed man and woman the world over. . . . It is . . . 'Christ in you, the hope of glory' (Colossians 1:26)⁵²³

Summary

Tozer believed that the filling with the Holy Spirit with its resulting purity, love, power, truth, and worship was not an end, but that the pursuit of God continued. He believed that in spite of the spiritual thrust from being filled with the Spirit, there was still need for the Spirit-filled Christian to live a life in the Spirit. He taught the need for further training, sanctifying experiences, spiritual advances and continued growth in the knowledge and experience of God. Tozer believed that gazing on Christ, meditating on the Scriptures, praying, worshiping with others, serving and working and being active, giving time to the cultivation of knowing God, determining to make progress, recognizing imperfections, being tempted, experiencing spiritual dryness and staleness, obeying, maintaining a devotional mood and growing in friendship with the Holy Spirit were all involved in the maintainance of and growth in the Spirit-filled life. Tozer also believed that Christianity was not producing saints, but that it needed to, in order to raise its spirituality from its low level. He

⁵²³The Divine Conquest, op. cit., p. 127. Cf. That Incredible Christian, op. cit., pp. 65, 66 where Tozer speaks of ". . . a select company of Christians through the centuries . . ." who had to a degree experienced "the Beautific Vision," or "the immediate sight of the ever-blessed Godhead," which most Christians must wait for until Christ comes again.

himself gave what he felt were characteristics of a saint, and the study noted that these characteristics fit in with his doctrine of the Spirit-filled life. Finally, Tozer believed that the Spirit-filled life was not just for certain people, but was the normal life for all the redeemed everywhere on the earth.

IV. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary

In the course of this chapter, three major subjects were covered: the regenerated Christian seeking after the fulness of God and holiness, God making the Christian holy and filling him with the Holy Spirit, and the Christian's Spirit-filled walk. In Tozer's doctrine, these were all part of a never-ending pursuit of the Christian for a deeper knowledge and experience of God.

The pursuit began with the prevenient drawings of God, whereby the Christian was given the desire for more of God and for holiness of heart. The serious Christian soon discovered the sinful nature within, which hindered his progress. Next, he saw the necessity of making a full surrender of himself to God in order to gain that for which his heart yearned. Finally, having surrendered his all and having entered into the crucifying experience, he was ready to receive holiness and the fulness of God.

The relationship of Christ to holiness was that His death and redeeming blood made possible the destruction of the sinful nature, His cross experience was the pattern for the Christian's crucifixion experience, His holy life was the pattern to which the Christian's life

was to conform, His indwelling the Christian made holy living possible, and His redemption made holiness a requirement for men. This holiness received by the Christian was not God's infinitely perfect holiness, but was a real, instantaneous moral purification through the destruction of the sinful nature, and was the God-given ability to live a pure, Christ-like life.

The relationship of the Holy Spirit to this work of holiness was that of filling. Tozer said that the doctrine and experience of the Holy Spirit had been neglected in the practical life of the Church, and that there was also a difference between knowledge about the Spirit and personal experience of Him. Tozer considered the filling with the Spirit as the culmination of redemption, provided by God's plan and Christ's blood. The world, he taught, could not receive the Holy Spirit; the Christian received a measure of the Spirit in regeneration; but, the Spirit's fulness was needed by and provided for the Christian, for Churches, and for denominations. The Holy Spirit was to be received instantaneously, consciously, and immediately.

Before the Spirit could come, however, some hindrances had to be removed and some conditions had to be met. Then the seeker had to do four things: present his all to God, ask, obey, and believe. Among the results of the filling with the Spirit which Tozer listed were the following: a direct witness of the Spirit, holiness, power, joy, God-consciousness, love for the Scriptures and fellowship with God.

Although Tozer considered the filling with the Spirit as the full restoration of God to the whole heart of man, he also believed and

taught that the fulness of the Spirit was not an end, but a means to an entire life of walking in the Spirit. Further training, experiences, spiritual advances, obedience, growth in acquaintance with God, and facing imperfections and temptations were some of the elements of the Spirit-filled life. Finally, it was Tozer's conviction that the Spirit-filled life was not something for special people, but was for all Christians.

Conclusions

From the previous discussion of the regenerated Christian, depravity, surrender, the cross, Christ, cleansing, the Holy Spirit, the filling with the Spirit, and living in the Spirit, the following general conclusions were made:

1. Tozer viewed the Christian life as progressive and expanding in nature.
2. Tozer believed that the Christian needed a second work of God's grace.
3. Tozer believed that the second work of grace was an instantaneous work of God available in this life.
4. Tozer believed that the second work of grace was an actual destruction of the sinful nature in the Christian and a filling with the Holy Spirit of God, resulting in love, power, purity, Christ-likeness, illumination of truth, gifts and a higher level of spiritual worship.
5. Tozer believed that the second work of grace was the culmination of redemption, the full restoration of God to the whole heart of man.

6. Tozer believed that the second work of grace was followed by a continuation of progress in the Christian life, called the Spirit-filled life.

7. Tozer believed that the need for the Spirit in individuals, churches and denominations was crucial.

8. Tozer believed that the Spirit-filled life was the norm for all Christians.

9. Tozer's teaching about Christ showed that Christ was the center, circumference and sum of his theology, and was essential to his doctrine of holiness.

10. Tozer's teaching about the Holy Spirit showed that He was the center, circumference and sum of his theology, and was essential to his doctrine of holiness.

The distinctive features of Tozer's teaching concerning holiness were as follows:

1. A criticising of false teachings about Christ and His Lordship, and the dearth of teaching about the Holy Spirit.

2. A continual emphasis upon the necessity of the regenerated, as the dwelling place of God, to possess and be possessed by His fulness.

3. A continual insistence upon the necessity of holy living, holy living being freedom from all fleshly manifestations and the constant expression of a Christlike life in conduct and spirit.

4. An outspoken conviction and complaint that holy living and the longing for God and holiness were rare among contemporary Christians.

5. A pervasive repetition of the absolute necessity of self-crucifixion for victorious Christian living.

6. An emphasizing of the person and work of the Holy Spirit, especially as they relate to individual Christians, churches, denominations, and the Church-at-large.

7. An insistence upon the crucial work of the Holy Spirit filling individuals.

8. An insistence upon the absolute necessity of Christ having actual Lordship in the Church.

9. A continual emphasis upon the Christian's need for an ever-increasing, deep and satisfying knowledge and experience of God.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARIES, CONCLUSIONS, AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

In keeping with the objectives of the study, which were to determine what Tozer's doctrine of holiness was and what place this doctrine had in relation to his theology as a whole, the final chapter of the study presented the following: (1) a summary of the main points of Tozer's theology, as discussed in the previous chapters; (2) a summary of Tozer's doctrine of holiness; and (3) conclusions concerning Tozer's theology, about the relationship of his doctrine of holiness to his theology, and conclusions about his doctrine of holiness. The final chapter also made suggestions for further study in the thought of A. W. Tozer.

I. SUMMARY OF TOZER'S THEOLOGY

Tozer's thought was presented in three chapters, One: "'The Knowledge of the Holy'"; Two: "'Man: The Dwelling Place of God'"; and Three: "'The Pursuit of God' and 'The Divine Conquest'." The titles of the chapters were titles of four of Tozer's books, chosen for the presentation of the study because they best described the emphases of his teachings. These three chapters discussed in order, (1) the nature of God and His relationship to His creation; (2) man as God's dwelling place before the Fall, the Fall, and reconciliation; and (3) the regenerated man and his relationship to God. The main

subjects covered were God, man, sin, the sinner, redemption, justification, regeneration, the Christian, depravity, crucifixion, Christ, cleansing, the Holy Spirit, the filling with the Spirit, and the Spirit-filled life. Each chapter was summarized below.

"The Knowledge of the Holy"

The all-importance of God in Tozer's theology was discussed in three sections, "The Fact of God," "The Doctrine of God" and "The Experience of God."

Tozer taught the importance of God Himself as the center against which all else was measured, as the Originator of all, as the One who was over all and who was exalted in honor and dignity. Tozer believed that God made man, that man was made to know and worship God, and that Christ's redemption was for the purpose of making fallen human beings lovers and worshipers of God again. God, Himself, Tozer claimed, was the best gift to man in redemption.

After "The Fact of God" Tozer's doctrine of God was discussed. The importance of having a right concept of God was emphasized by Tozer, and he encouraged study and meditation on His character and being. There was a brief noting of Tozer's concept of God, followed by his teachings about one of His attributes especially pertinent to the study, His holiness.

The final section, "The Experience of God," dealt with the definition of experience, the importance of experience and the reception of the experience of God. Tozer defined experience as a direct, personal, conscious, spiritual encounter with God. He believed that the

Presence of God was the central fact in Christianity, and taught that the greatest need of human beings was to experience God. The receiving of the experience of God, according to Tozer, was accomplished by beginning with God Himself, by having a right conception of who He is and what He is like. This introduced immediately the problem of a Holy God and an unholy man knowing each other. It was noted that the questions concerning unholy man and a holy God having fellowship were answered fully in Chapters Three and Four. Tozer's teaching about the experience of holiness ended the chapter.

The conclusions drawn from the material of the chapter were that God was the center, circumference, and sum of Tozer's theology, and that his doctrine of holiness was subordinate to his theology as a whole.

"Man: The Dwelling Place of God"

Chapter Three discussed God and man under the following headings: (1) The Nature and Purpose of Man; (2) The Predicament of Man; (3) The Provision for Man; (4) The Call of God and the Response of Man; (5) The Beginning of the Restoration of Man.

The study stated two truths which were seen to be foundational in Tozer's theology: one, man was created in the image of God; two, man was created to worship. Tozer believed that man was the most like God of all of His creation, that the Fall marred man's moral likeness (his holiness) to God, and that man, since the Fall, still had a similarity to God, ie. both were spiritual beings. The purpose for man being created, Tozer maintained, was for the pleasure of God, for man

to enjoy God and glorify Him, and for both to have communion together. Man's nature and purpose, the study stated, added up to the truth which Tozer taught again and again, that man was the "dwelling place of God."

Tozer's doctrine of the Fall of man was discussed next. The Fall was the result of man's willful rebellion and involved man in a great predicament: he was guilty for his rebellion and would face judgment for his sins; he was alienated from God's fellowship; he was deprived of God's indwelling presence; and he was perverted in his nature. Tozer saw the vacating of God from man His dwelling place and the loss of man's fellowship with God as a terrible tragedy. The perverseness of man's nature, resulting from the Fall, meant that man had a bent toward evil in his heart. Added to these elements of man's predicament were the facts that sin had distorted man's moral judgment, that sin would not go away by itself, and that man, through sinning, could waste his precious God-originated and God-like self.

The tragic results of man's fall, the affecting of every part of his life, was solved in Tozer's theology by his teachings about the provision for man. The problem of reconciliation, Tozer said, was solved by the atoning work of Christ, whereby justice did its work and God, through the blood of Christ, was enabled to look upon the trusting man as if he had never sinned. The problem of making man holy in fact, not just imputing the merits of Christ's atonement, was taken up at the close of Chapter Three and in Chapter Four. First, however, Tozer's teaching about how the benefits of redemption were transferred to the sinner was outlined.

The benefits of the atonement were made effectual in the life of sinners, Tozer believed, only after God's call and man's response. He emphasized the sovereignty of God, saying that God exercised the initiative in salvation by calling man to Himself; His was the "master choice." Man's part in salvation, Tozer explained, was a reaction, an accepting. Neither God's nor man's part in salvation must be ignored, he said.

Man received reconciliation through repentance and faith. The study described Tozer's doctrines of repentance and faith, stating that he was careful to define what he thought was the true Biblical meaning of these acts of man. The dominant element in his teaching about repentance and faith was change. He insisted that to be true they must both involve an actual change of purpose and conduct from sin to righteousness, from an old life to a new life, and from disobedience to obedience. Tozer emphasized that faith was active rather than passive, inseparable from obedience (morals), a journey, not a once-for-all act, rested upon the character of God instead of reason, and was the committal of the whole man in trust and obedience to God and Jesus Christ.

After faith and repentance on the part of man, there was the beginning of the restoration of man. This part of Tozer's theology, as the study showed, was concerned primarily with regeneration, although he believed that when a person repented and exercised faith, God also justified him. Tozer taught that regeneration was an act of God which restored the divine nature to the heart of man, a new beginning for man to explore the riches of God, a beginning of restoring man to the divine

image by progressive change, and an instantaneous moral change which made the sinner no longer a sinner. Tozer explicitly stated that when God declared a person righteous, He immediately set about making him righteous.

From the discussion about regeneration as an immediate moral change and a progressive change toward the divine image, and from other evidence, the study concluded the following: Tozer believed that regeneration was a work of holiness, that regeneration produced the desire for holiness in the believer, and that holiness began in regeneration. Tozer also believed that regeneration did not end the believer's problems. The next chapter discussed God and the regenerated man's relationship, and the discovery and solving of the Christian's problem of inner conflict.

"'The Pursuit of God' and 'The Divine Conquest'"

Chapter Four recapitulated the main ideas of Tozer's theology from Chapters Two and Three, and said about Tozer that whether he looked back to the beginning, or to the present, or to the future, all meaning for life was wrapped up in the main theme of God indwelling man: the glory of creation was God and man in communion, the glory of redemption was God and man in reunion for communion, and the glory of the end of the age will be God and man in full and perfect fellowship forever.

The third chapter also noted that the work of God in reconciling and regenerating man was not the full and perfect restoration of man to God and God to man. Tozer taught that the Christian needed another definite, crisis experience with God, and that his relationship to God

throughout life was one of increasing knowledge and experience. The continuous relationship of God and man before the crisis experience, the crisis itself and the continuing relationship of God and man after the crisis, were discussed under the headings "'The Pursuit of God' Begun," "'The Divine Conquest'," and "'The Pursuit of God' Continued."

Tozer described the pursuit of God as the spiritual hunger of a regenerated person to know God in an intimate and satisfying experience, and as his exploration of the riches of the Triune God, an exploration with no known end. The pursuit, Tozer said, was begun in regeneration and in the prevenient drawings of God, and was continued by His drawing and the Christian's wholehearted following. Tozer lamented the fact, however, that there were few Christians in his day who were hungering after God and holiness. He pointed out several reasons for the lack of desire, and also pointed out cases of faulty desire. For those who were hungering after God, however, Tozer described the steps to the fulness of God and holiness.

The steps consisted of increasing in desire; discovering and acknowledging an inner principle of sin, which hindered growth and the fulfillment of the hearts holy longings; surrendering all to God; dying to self, or experiencing crucifixion with Christ; seeking to be filled with the Holy Spirit; and being cleansed and filled with the Holy Spirit. The cleansing and filling with the Spirit was called in the study "'The Divine Conquest'."

The final section of the study was "'The Pursuit of God' Continued." It covered Tozer's doctrine of the Spirit-filled life, which taught that the cleansing and filling with the Holy Spirit was not an end, but was the beginning of a life-long walk in the Spirit with its further training, spiritual advances, temptations, and necessary steps for the maintainance of and growth in the Spirit-filled life. The Spirit-filled life was both the fulfillment and the continuation of the pursuit of God which began in regeneration.

II. SUMMARY OF TOZER'S DOCTRINE OF HOLINESS

Having shown the major points of Tozer's theology, the study summarized his doctrine of holiness in the following statements.

Understanding Holiness

1. True holiness was unknown to the natural man; he did not know what God's true holiness was.
2. True holiness could not be understood by extension, by thinking of a pure being, or object, and then raising that purity to the highest degree possible to thought.
3. True holiness could not be understood by comparison, because man knew nothing like it.
4. God's holiness was unique, incomprehensible, unapproachable and unattainable.
5. True holiness could only be understood and appreciated by a new way, not by the reasoning powers.
6. True holiness was understood only by the Holy Spirit of the

Holy God Himself imparting understanding to man's spirit.

7. True holiness was imparted by theological knowledge producing faith in the humble, penitent soul.

8. True holiness was imparted by a revelation to the human heart of its own depravity and an inner vision of God's holiness.

9. True holiness was understood by the Christian through the Word of God, the Spirit of God and a personal experience, which resulted in a revelation of personal inner uncleanness and the response of worship.

10. The experience of the revelation of holiness was revolutionary.

The Holiness of God

1. God's holiness was one of His many attributes.

2. Holiness was the way God was, not a part of Him; He was holy.

3. God's holiness was absolute, infinite, incomprehensible purity.

4. God's holiness was unique in that He was the standard of holiness; He was not called upon to conform to a standard.

5. The uniqueness of God's holiness was seen in the Holy Spirit: He was pure in the absolute and infinite sense, while men had degrees and grades of holiness.

6. God's holiness was unchanging; He had never been less holy and could never be any holier than He was.

The Holiness of God Related to Creation

1. God made holiness the moral climate necessary to the health of the universe.
2. Whatever threatened the health (holiness) of creation drew the judgment of God; His judgments on earth had always been holy acts for its preservation.
3. God's holiness which He shared with man was contingent and relative: that is, man depended upon God for holiness, but the holiness he received was not God's absolute holiness.
4. God shared His holiness with man by imputation and impartation.
5. Holiness was the requirement for man because Christ's atonement made holiness available.
6. The holiness required of man was not absolute holiness; God had not said that man was to be as holy as God was.
7. God's holiness, before which no man could say he was holy, and His command to follow after holiness without which no man could see the Lord, faced the Christian with a dilemma.
8. God's holiness required that He refuse to allow sin to come into His fellowship. Redemption provided judicial pardon for the sinner, but the grace and kindness of God could not make it morally right for a holy being to fellowship with an unholy one.
9. Unholy man needed a purging and an impartation of a new nature, in order to have fellowship with God.
10. Unholy man needed to become like God, in a measure, in order to know Him.

The Experience of Holiness

1. Holiness was a spiritual experience, not just a doctrine.
2. Holiness heard was not necessarily holiness experienced.
3. In Tozer's day, where holiness as a truth was accepted without question, there was still a lack of inward certainty in the churches.
4. Preachers who spoke glibly about the deeper life caused wonder as to whether they spoke from hearsay or personal experience.
5. Bible schools were turning out young men and women who knew the theory of holiness, but not the experience. Tozer believed that the effect would be another generation of Christians who would lack personal experience of the power of the Spirit, and that the next generation would drop the theory of holiness.

The Holiness of Man in Regeneration

1. Man was unlike God as to His holiness, but like Him because both were spirit beings.
2. Man's nature after the Fall was perverse.
3. Man was a slave to his perverse nature and needed outside help to escape its downward pull.
4. Man's moral judgment was perverted, which caused him to see good as evil and evil as good. Proof of his inherent evilness was his managing to turn good into evil.
5. Although the atonement brought the believing sinner back into a just state, he needed to be made holy in order to have fellowship with God.

6. Through repentance and faith man forsook sin and was justified and regenerated.

7. When God justified a man, declaring him righteous, He also set about making him righteous.

8. Regeneration established a state of moral purity, a progressing toward likeness to the divine image, and a desire for holiness.

9. God made the redeemed man holy by entering his nature and using that nature for expressing His own moral perfections.

10. In spite of initial moral purity, the desire for holiness, and the progressing toward the divine image, the regenerated man still had an inward struggle with the sin nature.

The Christian's Desire for Holiness

1. The regenerated man had a hunger for God and holiness.

2. The fulfillment of his desire was accomplished by his taking certain steps.

3. The first step was to have desire become strong desire.

4. Tozer did not see many in his day who had the desire for holiness; but, he still believed that initially the supreme desire of the Christian was for holiness.

5. Tozer knew some had experienced the desire and the fulfillment of the desire.

6. Tozer believed that one of the greatest problems for the Christian was sanctification: how to become as pure as he knew he should be and had to be in order to know God intimately.

7. Tozer saw some people wishing to be holy, but not wanting it; that is, they were not willing to meet God's conditions to receive it.

8. Tozer saw some people desiring happiness instead of holiness; but holiness, not happiness, was the emphasis in the New Testament.

9. Compromise (settling for a low kind of Christianity, or worldliness), was one reason Tozer saw for people losing the desire for holiness.

10. Another reason for the lack of desire for holiness was false thinking, not believing in a sovereign God. Believing in a sovereign God would cause people to seek to crucify their flesh and to put on the new man renewed in holiness.

11. A third reason for the lack of desire for holiness was failure to be stimulated to seek a holier life by meeting Christian saints. Christians should have moved naturally by stages toward spiritual perfection, because the Holy Spirit was their teacher, but some did not learn the lessons He tried to teach.

12. A fourth reason for the lack of desire for holiness was placing the first work of grace, the new birth, too low as to its results.

13. Tozer thanked God for those who were desiring to be holy, prayed that their numbers would increase, but reminded people that at the judgment of Christ, Christians would have to show Him that they had been serious, that they had been out to be holy.

The Christian's Unholiness

1. The second step of the Christian in having his desire for holiness fulfilled was the discovery of the sinful nature within him. The sinful nature deterred the Christian's progress and needed to be recognized and acknowledged.

2. The sinful nature hindered the Christian from entering the Holy of Holies of God's intimate Presence.

3. The sinful nature was identified by various names.

4. Tozer made the distinction between "sins" and "sin."

5. Sins issued from "sin." Sin in its essence was to set the will against the will of God, man dethroning God and making himself king of his own soul.

6. Tozer found scriptural support for his belief about the principle of sin in the Christian. One of his main passages for proof was Romans 6-8.

7. He found support for his belief also in the manifestations of sin in contemporary Christianity, some of which were possessiveness (the desire for things), intemperance, self-pity, self-sufficiency, self-confidence, and self-love.

8. He believed that the self-sins, as he called them, were seen in grosser forms as egotism, self-promotion and exhibitionism in Christian leaders.

9. Tozer did not equate the sin nature with the physical human body.

The Reception of Holiness: Surrender

1. Tozer taught that for the Christian to be delivered from the tyranny of "things" he had to surrender things to God and ask God to take them out of his heart.

2. The Christian had to surrender his all to God and make a once-for-all decision to exalt God over everything. God did not, however, in taking over, destroy the Christian's will, He only sanctified it and united it with His own.

3. Tozer taught that this surrender was not merely passive, but was to active obedience.

4. He also taught that those who gave up all still possessed all, while being free from the sense of possessing.

5. Surrender also resulted in a new power for life, a new quality of life, and the kindly reign of God in the heart.

The Reception of Holiness: Death

1. Tozer distinguished between the cross of Christ, the cross of the Christian's crucifixion to self and the cross of the Christian's daily experience.

2. The cross of Christ purchased for the Christian his judicial identification with Christ's crucifixion.

3. The cross of the Christian's crucifixion was his own agonizing death to self, the psychological experience of which approached the actual crucifixion of Christ.

4. The cross of the Christian's daily life was his willing acceptance of sacrifice for Christ's sake.

5. For Tozer, the cross meant death, the destruction of one way of life and the beginning of a new one.

6. He believed that when the cross was no longer preached as an instrument of death, it lost its power.

7. The Christian had to die on his cross in order to have resurrection life, in order to be delivered from the sinful nature.

8. The Christian did not destroy the carnal nature, however; after surrendering it to God for destruction, the Christian had to reckon (believe) himself crucified with Christ. It had to be real faith and a real crucifixion, but not a self-crucifixion. God had to put the sin nature to death.

Christ and Holiness

1. Christ, Tozer believed, was received in principle as Lord in the initial work of salvation, not in the crisis experience of holiness.

2. Christ's holiness was God's holiness, because Christ was God.

3. Christ's holy character was the pattern for the Christian's life.

4. Christ's shed blood purchased deliverance from the evil nature for the Christian and brought holiness.

5. Christ's crucifixion was the pattern and basis for the Christian's own crucifixion.

6. Christ's power was sufficient for the Christian to live a pure life; He entered the Christian in regeneration and lived a holy life through him.

7. Christ was sanctification, and His call was to holiness.
8. Christ was the object of faith for purification.
9. Christ's redemption was to sanctify people.
10. Christ's Spirit was the Spirit of holiness.
11. Christ would judge people for their intentions about holiness.
12. Holiness was Christlikeness.
13. Christ's provision of holiness made holiness a requirement for man.
14. Christ's atonement brought holiness to man by imputation and impartation.

The Reception of Holiness: Cleansing

1. The work of God in making the Christian holy was identified in Tozer's doctrine with the terms sanctification, holiness, purity and cleansing.
2. The work of God was a work of destroying the sinful nature in the Christian.
3. It was instantaneous.
4. It resulted in moral purity and the enablement to live a pure life.
5. Holiness in the Christian was not absolute perfection, nor was it release from human frailties and temptations, nor exemption from the need for discipline, cross-carrying, obedience, and growth in grace.
6. Holiness was deliverance from inner sins such as irritability, temper, uncharitable attitudes, and resentfulness.

7. Holiness was a real purification that extended to the Christian's whole heart.

8. Holiness was a present possibility through the work of God, Christ's atoning blood, and the Holy Spirit.

9. Holiness was not obtained by effort and works, but by abandoning the effort to be holy and trusting God to do the work.

10. The Christian needed to have faith, but should not wait passively for holiness.

11. Holiness resulted in Christ living His life through the Christian: being loving, friendly, prayerful, worshipful, kindly, self-sacrificing.

The Holy Spirit

1. Tozer believed that the neglect of the doctrine and experience of the Spirit in the practical life of the Church was tragic.

2. Neglect of the Spirit was one of the reasons for the lack of His power in the Church.

3. He claimed that most church members had a vague conception of the Holy Spirit.

4. He noted that there was a vast difference between knowing about the Spirit and knowing Him in personal experience.

5. Tozer believed in the Holy Spirit's reality, personality, divinity, likeness to Christ, work of performing the purposes of God toward nature and the world and the Church, and His ability to penetrate human nature, expelling evil but leaving humanity intact.

6. Tozer believed that the Church needed the Spirit and that the Holy Spirit had the right to be Lord of the Church.

7. He believed that God never intended His Church to exist without the Holy Spirit.

8. It was by the Spirit that God did His works.

9. The Church had neglected the Lordship of the Spirit.

10. The Church turned to other things in order to make up for the absence of the Holy Spirit.

11. The Holy Spirit was needed for the illumination of divine truth, for the bestowal of divine power, purity, and gifts, and for the ability to worship.

The Reception of Holiness: The Need for the Spirit's Filling

1. Tozer believed that the filling with the Holy Spirit was needed by the Christian, by churches, and by denominations.

2. The Holy Spirit could not be received by the world.

3. The Christian needed the Spirit in His fulness, even though he had received the Spirit in a measure in regeneration.

4. Tozer taught that because the disciples at Pentecost were saved men who received the Spirit's fulness, modern Christians needed to be filled with the Spirit.

5. Because most modern Christians did not have the kind of life which the disciples had, modern Christians needed to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

6. Because Pentecost was not the end of the bestowal of the Holy Spirit, modern Christians needed to be filled with Him.

7. The Christian needed the Holy Spirit for truth, power, worship, purity, and gifts.

The Reception of Holiness: The Provision of the Spirit's Filling

1. Tozer believed that the filling with the Holy Spirit was provided for the Christian, for churches, and for denominations.

2. Anyone doubting the possibility of being filled with the Spirit was instructed to study the Scriptures.

3. Tozer based his belief in the filling with the Spirit upon the New Testament.

4. He believed that anyone who was serious about following the Lord would be brought to the conclusion that the filling was provided by God's plan and Christ's blood.

5. He felt that believing in the instantaneous nature of the Spirit's filling was essential.

6. He believed that the Holy Spirit could be received now, and that the person receiving Him would know that the filling had taken place.

7. He believed that the Spirit-filled life was the normal thing for Christians to experience.

8. He was serious about the possibility and need of the Spirit's filling the Church, and he believed that tragic results would happen if He was not received by evangelicals.

The Reception of Holiness: Preparation for the Spirit's Filling

1. Tozer believed that before the Spirit could come in His fulness, various hindrances had to be removed. These hindrances were

fear of emotion, of fanaticism and of the Spirit Himself, neglect of the Spirit, preaching about the Spirit without having Him, and easy faith.

2. The Christian and the Church needed to acknowledge their failure to receive the inheritance of the Spirit, and they needed to repent of their wrong attitudes and acts toward Him, beginning then to think of the Spirit as One to be obeyed and worshiped.

3. Tozer believed that before the Spirit would come in His fulness, certain conditions had to be met by the seeker.

4. The seeker had to believe beyond doubt in the possibility of being filled with the Spirit. For this, he needed to meditate on the Scriptures.

5. The seeker needed to be sure that he wanted to be filled with the Spirit, for He would be Lord.

6. The seeker had to have a consuming desire to be filled.

7. The seeker had to be sure he needed the Spirit, that having Him was indispensable.

8. The seeker had to go through an emptying process in order to prepare for the filling.

The Reception of Holiness: Receiving the Spirit's Filling

1. To receive the Spirit the Christian had to present his vessel, which meant his all.

2. To receive the Spirit the Christian had to ask God to fill him.

3. To receive the Spirit the Christian had to obey God.

4. To receive the Spirit the Christian had to believe God for the filling.

The Reception of Holiness: Results of the Spirit's Filling

1. Tozer believed that the reception of the Spirit was attested to by the direct witness of the Spirit Himself, apart from any emotional, psychological, or physical phenomena.

2. Tozer did not believe that the Holy Spirit was given primarily for gifts, such as tongues, or for power for service.

3. The Holy Spirit was given primarily for spiritual worship and holiness.

4. Noting the differences in the disciples after Pentecost, Tozer listed seven results of the filling with the Spirit: The consciousness of God's presence, the joy of the Holy Spirit, the power of words, a clear sense of reality, separation from the world, delight in prayer and fellowship with God, and love for the Scriptures.

5. Further results were purity and the restoration of the emotions to their rightful place and use.

6. Tozer saw the filling with the Spirit as the full restoration of God to the whole heart of man.

The Spirit-filled Life

1. Tozer taught that the filling with the Holy Spirit was not an end, but a beginning of a life lived in the Spirit.

2. The Christian needed more training, sanctifying experiences, spiritual advances and continued growth in knowing God.

3. Maintaining and growing in the Spirit-filled life involved continuous faith in Christ, meditation on the Scriptures, prayer, corporate worship, service, work, activity, time given to God, determination to make progress, recognition of imperfections, temptation, experiencing spiritual dryness and staleness, obedience, a devotional mood, and increasing friendship with the Holy Spirit.

4. Tozer believed that Christianity was not producing saints.

5. He believed that Christianity needed to produce saints in order to raise its spirituality to a scriptural level.

6. He gave what he believed were characteristics of a saint.

7. Tozer believed that the Spirit-filled life was not just for special people, but was the normal life for all of the redeemed everywhere on earth.

III. CONCLUSIONS OF THE STUDY

Tozer's Theology

From the preceding discussion of Chapters Two through Four, Tozer's theology is seen to focus upon two main points:

1. God (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit).
2. The personal experience of God.

Furthermore, the person of God and the personal experience of Him is related to Tozer's doctrine of holiness. This is stated in the next two sections.

Tozer's Doctrine of Holiness in Relation to His Theology

The relationship of Tozer's doctrine of holiness to his theology as a whole is as follows:

1. God was the center, sum, and circumference of Tozer's theology, therefore, the relationship of his doctrine of holiness to his theology as a whole was one of subordination.

2. Man's relationship to God was a major part of Tozer's theology, and he taught that holiness was essential in the relationship of God and man, therefore, holiness was an essential element in Tozer's theology.

3. God was central in Tozer's theology, therefore, God was central in his doctrine of holiness.

4. Tozer's theology emphasized the necessity of an actual and personal experience of God by man, and said that holiness was essential in man's relationship to God, therefore, Tozer's theology and his doctrine of holiness emphasized the necessity of an actual experience of holiness by man.

Tozer's Doctrine of Holiness

The study of Tozer's doctrine of holiness was descriptive, therefore, the previous summary of his doctrine of holiness can, in a sense, be taken as the conclusion of the study. There are, however, a number of points that need to be stated separately, so that the distinctive thrust of Tozer's doctrine of holiness can be clearly seen. These points are as follows:

1. Holiness was an actual, experiential change from sinfulness to purity, both in regeneration and the baptism with the Holy Spirit.

2. Holiness, in its highest sense, was the full restoration of the fulness of God to the whole of the Christian in actual experience.

3. The sin nature was real and was the reason the Christian could not experience holiness of heart and life without a further work of God in his heart.

4. The crucifixion of the Christian was an actual and absolutely necessary experience for holiness to become reality.

5. The baptism with the Holy Spirit was indispensable for the experience of holiness.

6. The Spirit-filled (e.g. God-filled) life was the normal experience for all Christians to have. It included an increasing knowledge of the Holy Spirit Himself.

7. To know and experience more and more of God was the true meaning and end of holiness.

IV. SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

Because the study was limited to a description of Tozer's doctrine of holiness and its relationship to his theology as a whole, there were certain aspects of his doctrine of holiness which were not studied. Some of these aspects deserve and are suggested for further study.

During the course of the study, a number of apparent contradictions appeared concerning Tozer's doctrine of holiness. These contradictions were not dealt with because this study was concerned with the clear expressions of his doctrine in his writings and speaking, not with aberrations of expression. A study of these contradictions, however, might be valuable. Secondly, a study of the life of Tozer would be helpful in understanding why he expressed his theology and his

doctrine of holiness the way he did. Again, a more extensive study of his thought could be done from his tape recorded messages, available from the Christian and Missionary Alliance denomination. A study also could be done of Tozer's other doctrines such as the Church, eschatology, or evangelism. Finally, Tozer's doctrine of holiness could be studied to see whether or not it was Scriptural, and it could be compared to other interpretations of holiness.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BIBLIOGRAPHY

A. PRIMARY SOURCES

1. Books

- Tozer, A. W. Born After Midnight. Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Christian Publications, Inc., 1959. 142 pp.
- _____. The Christian Book of Mystical Verse. Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Christian Publications, Inc., 1963. 152 pp.
- _____. The Divine Conquest. Harrisburg, Pa.: Christian Publications, Inc., 1950. 128 pp.
- _____. Five Vows for Spiritual Power. Harrisburg, Pa.: Christian Publications, Inc., n.d. 16 pp.
- _____. How to be Filled with the Holy Spirit. Harrisburg, Pa.: Christian Publications, Inc., n.d. 30 pp.
- _____. The Knowledge of the Holy. New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1961. 128 pp.
- _____. Let My People Go. Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Christian Publications, Inc., 1947. 127 pp.
- _____. Man: The Dwelling Place of God. Harrisburg, Pa.: Christian Publications, Inc., 1966. 174 pp.
- _____. Of God and Men. Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Christian Publications, Inc., 1960. 133 pp.
- _____. Paths to Power. Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Christian Publications, Inc., n.d. 43 pp.
- _____. The Pursuit of God. Harrisburg, Pa.: Christian Publications, Inc., 1948. 128 pp.
- _____. The Root of the Righteous. Harrisburg, Pa.: Christian Publications, Inc., 1955. 160 pp.
- _____. That Incredible Christian. Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Christian Publications, Inc., 1964. 137 pp.
- _____. The Tozer Pulpit. Vol. I. Comp. Gerald B. Smith. Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Christian Publications, Inc., 1967. 158 pp.

_____. The Tozer Pulpit. Vol. II. Comp. Gerald B. Smith.
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Christian Publications, Inc., 1968.
146 pp.

_____. Wingspread. Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Christian Publications,
Inc., 1943. 143 pp.

2. Periodicals

The Alliance Weekly, LXXXV (June 3, 1950)-XCII (December 25,
1957).

The Alliance Witness, XCIII (January 1, 1958)-XCVIII (December
25, 1963).

Tozer, A. W. "A Place Where Thine Honor Dwelleth," The Alliance
Weekly, Vol. 90 (January 12, 1955), 3, 4, 6.

_____. "A Sermon for Communion Sunday," The Alliance Weekly, Vol. 87
(September 3, 1952), 567, 568, 576.

_____. "Are We Having a Revival of True Religion?," The Alliance
Weekly, Vol. 90 (May 25, 1955), 2.

_____. "As Many As Received Him" The Alliance Weekly, Vol. 89
(April 21, 1954), 3, 4, 6.

_____. "The Blessedness of the Fixed Heart," The Alliance Weekly,
Vol. 91 (June 6, 1956), 2.

_____. "The Christian's Witness to the World," The Alliance Witness,
Vol. 93 (January 1, 1958), 3, 4, 8.

_____. "Created to Worship," The Alliance Witness, Vol. 93 (June 18,
1958), 3, 4, 13.

_____. "The Day of the Drought," The Alliance Weekly, Vol. 85
(November 4, 1950), 693, 694.

_____. "The Duty of Opposing," The Alliance Weekly, Vol. 85 (July
8, 1950), 418.

_____. "Eating the Locoweed," The Alliance Weekly, Vol. 92 (December
11, 1957), 2.

_____. "Evangelical Snobbery," The Alliance Witness, Vol. 97 (November
28, 1962), 2.

_____. "Faith is a Continuous Act," The Alliance Weekly, Vol. 87
(February 6, 1952), 82.

- _____. "The Faith We Live By," The Alliance Weekly, Vol. 89
(September 8, 1954), 3, 4.
- _____. "God Loves Us in His Son," The Alliance Weekly, Vol. 89
(November 10, 1954), 2.
- _____. "God's Best Gift," The Alliance Weekly, Vol. 88 (June 3,
1953), 2.
- _____. "God's Greatest Gift to Man," The Alliance Witness, Vol. 98
(July 24, 1963), 3, 4, 11, 12.
- _____. "The 'Ground of the Soul'," The Alliance Weekly, Vol. 87
(May 7, 1951), 290.
- _____. "The Holy Spirit Is Here," The Alliance Weekly, Vol. 89
(June 23, 1954), 2.
- _____. "The Holy Spirit Is Indispensable," The Alliance Witness,
Vol. 97 (March 7, 1962), 2.
- _____. "How to Avoid Year-end Regrets," The Alliance Weekly,
Vol. 89 (December 29, 1954), 2.
- _____. "Humility Wins Where Force Cannot," The Alliance Weekly,
Vol. 87 (February 6, 1952), 82.
- _____. "The Importance of the Devotional Mood," The Alliance Witness,
Vol. 94 (September 23, 1959), 2.
- _____. "It Will Not Go Away," The Alliance Weekly, Vol. 86 (October
3, 1951), 610.
- _____. "The Law of the Leader," The Alliance Weekly, Vol. 91
(February 15, 1956), 2.
- _____. "The Lord Giveth Knowledge," The Alliance Weekly, Vol. 90
(March 16, 1955), 2.
- _____. "The Marks of God's Chosen," The Alliance Witness, Vol. 94
(November 4, 1959), 2.
- _____. "Not Papal Infallibility, But the Witness," The Alliance
Weekly, Vol. 91 (August, 29, 1956), 2.
- _____. "Obedience: A Neglected Doctrine," The Alliance Weekly,
Vol. 88 (November 18, 1953), 2.
- _____. "On Going Through School Without Learning Anything," The
Alliance Witness, Vol. 95 (June 29, 1960), 2.

- _____. "On Provocation," The Alliance Weekly, Vol. 90 (March 30, 1955), 2.
- _____. "Passivity and Power," The Alliance Weekly, Vol. 85 (July 8, 1950), 430.
- _____. "Religion of the Intellect vs Religion of the Spirit," The Alliance Weekly, Vol. 89 (March 17, 1954), 2.
- _____. "Salvation Walks the Earth," The Alliance Weekly, Vol. 86 (May 23, 1951), 306.
- _____. "The Set of the Sail," The Alliance Weekly, Vol. 88 (October 7, 1953), 2.
- _____. "Shadow vs. Reality," The Alliance Weekly, Vol. 87 (February 20, 1952), 114.
- _____. "Spiritual Preparation for Christian Service," The Alliance Weekly, Vol. 90 (September 14, 1955), 3, 4.
- _____. "Substitutes for Discipleship," The Alliance Witness, Vol. 94 (October 21, 1959), 2.
- _____. "Symptomatic Words: 'Fair,' 'Unfair'," The Alliance Weekly, Vol. 89 (May 19, 1954), 2.
- _____. "Temperance, the Rare Virtue," The Alliance Witness, Vol. 93 (September 10, 1958), 2.
- _____. "To the Spirit-Filled Man Everything is Spiritual," The Alliance Weekly, Vol. 87 (February 27, 1952), 130.
- _____. "Total Commitment to Christ: What Is It?," The Alliance Witness, Vol. 98 (September 18, 1963), 3, 4, 7, 8.
- _____. "The True Motive for Christian Conduct," The Alliance Witness, Vol. 94 (June 17, 1959), 2.
- _____. "The Waning Authority of Christ in the Churches," The Alliance Witness, Vol. 98 (May 15, 1963), 3, 4, 7, 8, 13.
- _____. "The Way of True Greatness," The Alliance Weekly, Vol. 92 (July 10, 1957), 2.
- _____. "We Must Stay by the Majors," The Alliance Weekly, Vol. 85 (June 10, 1950), 354.
- _____. "We Need Sanctified Thinkers--II," The Alliance Weekly, Vol. 90 (November 9, 1955), 2.

- _____. "What the Advent Established," The Alliance Witness, Vol. 94 (December 16, 1959), 2.
- _____. "What's in the Bible That People Today Ought to Know About?," The Alliance Witness, Vol. 97 (September 5, 1962), 3, 4.
- _____. "Who Is the Holy Spirit," The Alliance Weekly, Vol. 86 (October 31, 1951), 675, 676, 678.
- _____. "The Witness of the Spirit: What is it?" The Alliance Weekly, Vol. 89 (February 17, 1954), 2.

B. SECONDARY SOURCE

Fant, David J., Jr. A. W. Tozer: A Twentieth Century Prophet. Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Christian Publications, Inc., 1964. 188 pp.